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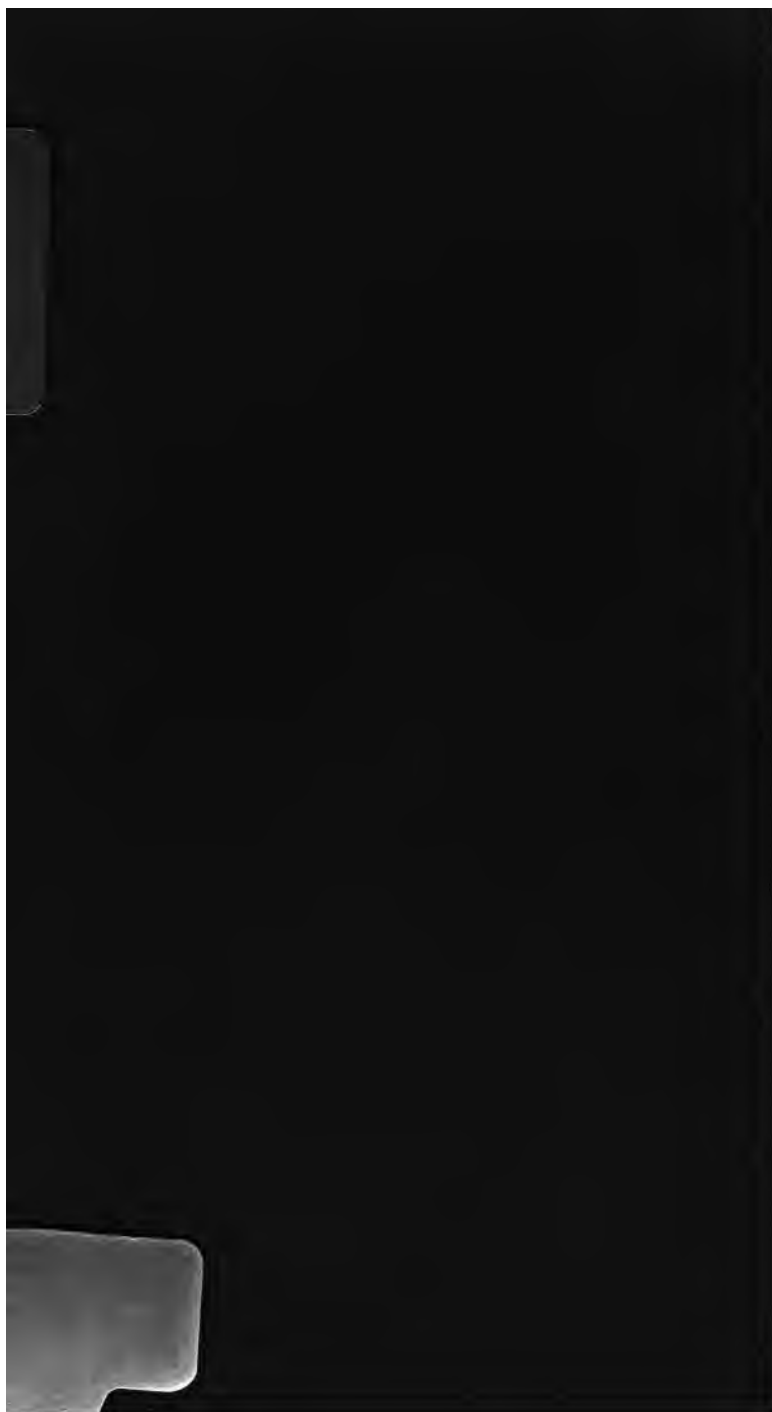
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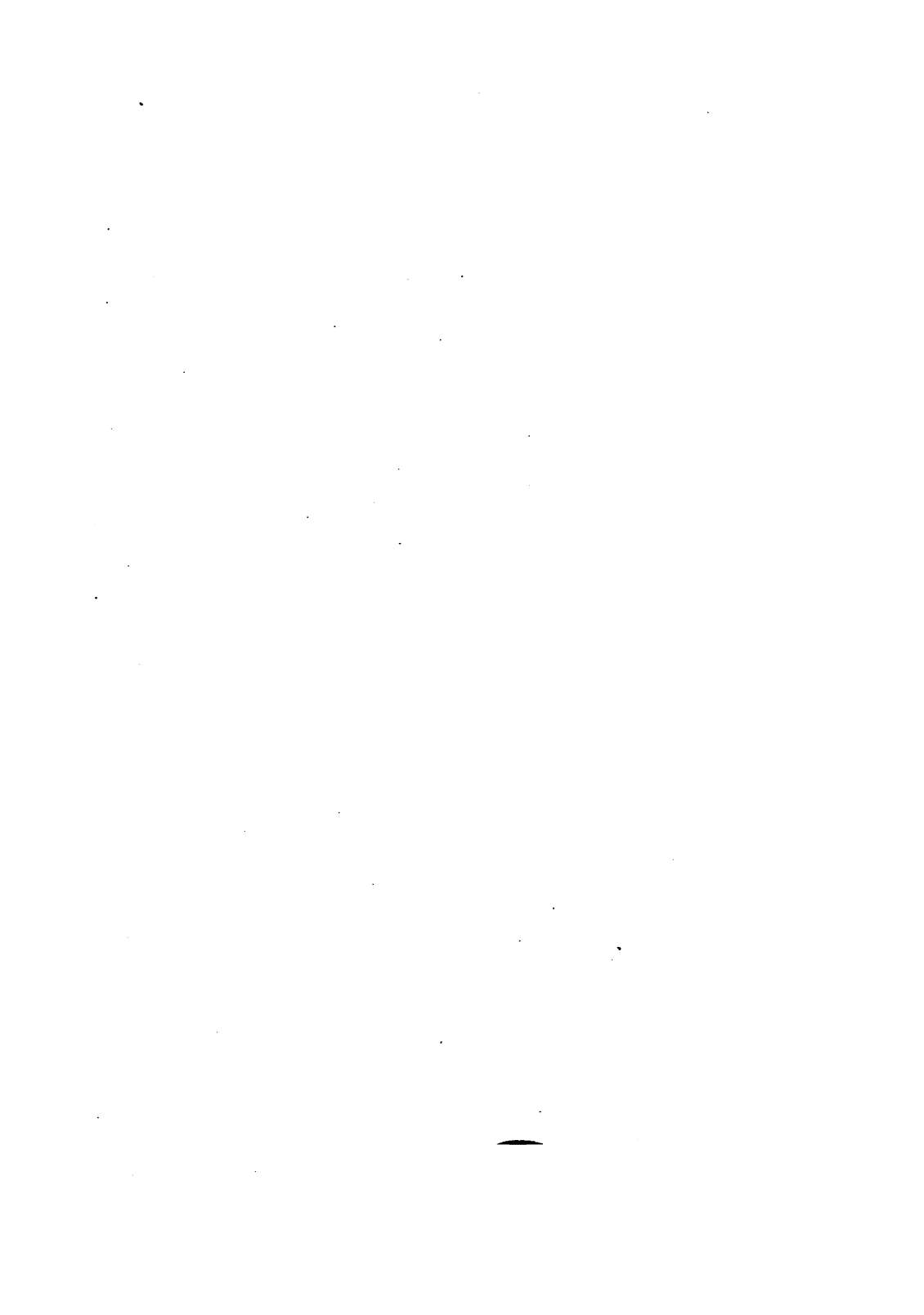
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SHAKESPEARE'S FUNERAL

AND OTHER PAPERS



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BY

SIR EDWARD HAMLEY

/

WILLIAM BLACKWOOD AND SONS

EDINBURGH AND LONDON

MDCCCLXXXIX



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SHAKESPEARE'S FUNERAL.

Place.—STRATFORD-ON-AVON.

Time.—THE 25TH OF APRIL 1616.

SCENE I.—*The Taproom of the Falcon Tavern
in the High Street, kept by Eleanor Comyng.*

HOSTESS *and* SLY.

Hostess. **K**IT SLY, Kit Sly, dost thou hear?
There be guests alighting in the
yard; run thou and help Robin ostler hold
their stirrups, and so do somewhat for the ale
thou ne'er pay'st for.

Sly. If I do, wilt thou let this one day slip
without rating and prating of thy score that I
owe thee?

Hostess. Yea, good Kit, if thou run quickly.

Sly. But wilt thou bid Francis draw me what
ale I may chance call for?

Hostess. Nay, that will I not, or thou wouldst empty my great tun. Thou wouldst serve me as thou didst the ale-wife of Wincot,¹ who says, poor soul, that she ne'er had cask in cellar these twelve years but thou wert more fatal to it than a leaking tap. By these ears, I heard her say so when the deputy's men were seizing her goods. Thou shalt not cozen me as thou didst Marian.

Sly. Hold stirrup thyself then. I'll not budge. I'll to sleep again by the chimney till it please God send me drink.

Enter DRAYTON² (*the poet*) and YOUNG
RALEIGH³ (*son of Sir Walter*).

Drayton. Sly, said she! Didst thou not hear, Walter, yon varlet's name? but 'twas scarce needful. The sodden face, the shaking nether lip, the eye watery and impudent, the paunch ale-swelled, the doublet liquor-stained, the hat

¹ "Ask Marian Hacket, the fat ale-wife of Wincot, if she know me not," says Kit Sly in the "Taming of the Shrew." Wincot is a village about three miles from Stratford.

² Michael Drayton, a Warwickshire poet of great repute in his day, was about a year older than Shakespeare, and had known him long and familiarly.

³ Young Walter Raleigh was Sir Walter's eldest son, and was now twenty-two years old. He accompanied his father, soon after, to South America, as commander of one of the companies that formed the military part of the expedition, to prepare for which was the express condition on which Sir Walter was released from the Tower in January 1616.

crushed from being much slept in, the apparel ruinous, because the tapster intercepts the fee that should be the tailor's and the cobbler's—hath not the master, without cataloguing one of these things, implied all, in half-a-score of pregnant words, for all the future? What a skill is that can make a poor sot immortal!

Sly. Sot, saidst thou!—but I care not. Will ye stand me, gentles, in a pot of ale?

Raleigh. Wilt thou answer, then, a few questions I would put to thee?

Sly. Ay—but the ale first; and be brief; I love not much question. Say on, and let the world slide.

Raleigh. A pot of ale, drawer, for this worthy man. And now tell me, Sly, is't not thy custom to use that phrase 'let the world slide'?¹

Sly. It may well be; 'tis a maxim I love; 'tis a cure for much. I am cold—let the world slide, for anon I shall be warmer. I am dry—let the world slide, for time will bring ale. I sit, pottle-pot in hand, i' the chimney-nook—let the world slide while I taste it.

Drayton. 'Tis a pretty philosophy, and might

¹ A phrase much affected by Sly the Tinker in the prelude to the "Taming of the Shrew."

serve for greater uses. But, for a further question—Wert thou acquainted with old John Naps of Greece? ¹

Sly. John Naps, quotha! what, old John! by Jeronimy, I knew him many a year, mended his pots and helped him empty them. 'A had been a sailor, or to say pirate would be to shoot nearer the clout; when sober his fashion was to say nought, but when drunk his talk was of the things 'a had seen in Greece—whereby they called him Naps of Greece.

Drayton. And didst thou know, too, Peter Turf and Henry Pimpernell?

Sly. Yea, as this pot-handle knows these fingers. For Turf, he was deputy-sexton of Wincot, and indeed digged Naps's grave, and was found lying drunk therein, with his spade beside him, at the hour of burial. For Pimpernell, 'twas a half-witted companion, but his grandam kept money in 's purse, and 'a served to pay scores, and 'a could join in a catch on occasion, thof 'a had but a small, cracked voice, and mostly sung his part to psalm-tunes. And now, masters, a question to ye—an ye answer

¹ One of Sly's acquaintances at Wincot.

“Stephen Sly, and Old John Naps of Greece,
And Peter Turf and Henry Pimpernell.”

—*Taming of the Shrew.*

A manuscript memorandum, in which Stephen Sly is mentioned, written at Stratford in 1614, is still extant.

not, faith, I care not—but how should such as ye know Naps and the others?

Drayton. They have been recorded, and thou too, in what will outlast your epitaphs. Doubtless thou hast heard of Master William Shakespeare of New Place.¹

Sly. Heard of him, said he! Ay, and seen him and talked with him both here and at Wincot when he came thither to his kinsfolk.² By this malt-juice, a merry gentleman, and a free—'a should have been a lord, for, look you, to bestow liquor on the thirsty is a lordly fashion, and I have owed him many a skinful. Marry, that tap's dry now.

Drayton. What, knave, hath he found at last that it is more virtuous to forget thee than to countenance thee?

Sly. Nay, I will say nought in his dispraise; 'a was good to me, and hath oft spoke with me, and I'll ne'er deny it now's dead and gone. Mayhap ye have come to the burial?

Drayton. Dead!

Raleigh. Master Shakespeare dead!

Hostess. Oh, masters, he hath spoke the

¹ New Place was a large house, with garden attached, in the town of Stratford—built by Sir Hugh Clopton in Henry VII.'s time, and purchased by Shakespeare in 1597.

² The Ardens, Shakespeare's relations by the mother's side, lived in the parish of Wincot.

truth, tho' he be no true man ; by these tears, he hath. Master Shakespeare parted o' Tuesday, and he will be buried this dientical day ; the coffin will be brought forth of New Place upon the stroke of two. I have talked with the bearers, and all.

Raleigh. Thus perish the hopes which drew me to Stratford. I thought to look on the foremost poet of the world—to hear his voice—perchance to be honoured with some discourse of him—and now I shall look but on his coffin. Oh, Master Drayton !

Drayton. We looked not, indeed, for this. 'Tis as if the sun were drawn from the firmament, and had left us to perpetual twilight. The radiant intellect is gone, and hath left but its pale reflection in his works—tho' these shall be immortal. Methinks, in future, the sky will be less blue, the air less warm, the flowers less gay ; for I honoured this man more than any, and whate'er I essayed to do 'twas with a secret thought of his judgment over me, as if he had been the conscience of mine intellect.

Hostess. Ye look pale—a cup of sack, sweet sirs ; for, ye know, a cheerful cup the heart bears up.

Drayton. Nay, woman, nay.

Hostess. 'Tis of the best, I warrant you ; 'tis from the stores of Master Quiney—him that

hath married Master Shakespeare's daughter Judith, and he deals in none but the best.

Drayton. 'Tis not sack that will help us. But canst thou tell us, good hostess, aught concerning his end ?

Hostess. Yea, well-a-day, that can I, for 'twas Gossip Joan Tisick who goeth out nursing, the same, your worships, that brought young Elizabeth Hall, his grandchild, into the world, that was sent for to him when 'twas seen which way 'a was likely to go ; whereby, she told me thereof yesternight over a cup of ale and sugar with a toasted crab in 't—for, said she, there's none in Stratford, Mistress Comyng, that Master Shakespeare thought more on than you. The doctor, Master Hall, says to her, " Have a care, Joan, of my father-in-law Shakespeare, says he ; for 'tis a parlous case, says he ; we be all mortal, says he—and the breath goeth when it listeth—therefore keep thou the better watch, for 'tis a man we could ill spare." " Fear not, Master Hall," quoth Joan, " I'll tend him an 'twere his mother." So, o' Tuesday night he said he felt easier, and he bid Mistress Hall and the doctor that they should leave him and take good rest. And 'a says to Joan, " Art drowsy, good Joan ?" Whereupon she made answer, " A little ; for I have been up," saith she, " all last night at a labour with Mistress Coney her

thirteenth child." "Ay," quoth he, "in thy calling thou seest both ends of life ; well, thou shalt sleep to-night, and all night if thou wilt." "Nay, sir," saith Joan, "not so ; but your worship being of so good cheer to-night, mayhap if I take a short nap 'twill do no harm." "If thou take a long one, good Joan," said Master Shakespeare, "it matters not, for, I warrant you, I shall take a longer." "It doth me good to hear your worship speak so," says Joan, "for sleep well is keep well, and a night's rest physics best"—and so tucks up the bedclothes, and draws the hangings, and leaves him as 'a was closing his eyes. Well, sweet sirs, all the night he lay quiet, and with the dawn Joan peeps me in through the curtains, and there he lay, quiet and smiling—and as the sun rose she peeps me in again and he was still quiet and smiling—and she touched his forehead ;—and he had been lying for hours (so the doctor said when Joan called him) as dead as his grandam.

Drayton. 'Twas, then, with good heart that this great soul passed to what himself hath called the undiscovered country : of whose inhabitants he must sure take his place among the most illustrious. Thou art sad, Walter—this grief touches thee, and, sooth, it becomes thee well. It bespeaks thy youth generous ; 'tis an assurance that thou hast thy father's

spirit, who, great himself, owns near kinship with greatness, and will sorrow for Shakespeare as for a brother.

Raleigh. 'Twas my father's wish, when he knew I was to be thy guest in Warwickshire, that I should pay my duty to Master Shakespeare, for, said he, there is no worthier thing in life than to take note of the greatest of thy companions in earth's pilgrimage; in them thou seest the quintessence of man's spirit, cleared of the muddy vapours which make common humanity so base and foolish: and this man is of the greatest, a companion indeed for princes, nay, himself a king, whose kingdom is of the imagination, and therefore boundless. Tell him, Walter, said my father, that in my long captivity¹ I have oft remembered our pleasant encounters at the Mermaid;² tell him, too, that I have solaced mine enforced solitude in the Tower with studying all of his works that have been given to us; and entreat him, in my name, not to leave those plays of his to the chances of the world, as fathers leave their misbegotten children, but to make them truly

¹ The twelve years' imprisonment in the Tower to which James I. had consigned him.

² The Mermaid was a tavern in London where Sir Walter had established, before his imprisonment, a club, of which Shakespeare, Ben Jonson, Beaumont, Fletcher, and others were members.

the heirs of his invention, and to spend on them that paternal care which shall prove them worthy of their source.

Hostess. Please you come in here to the Dolphin chamber, where Master Shakespeare loved to sit.

Raleigh. Well—now we are in it, I find it convenient and well lighted : and yet methinks 'tis but a small one.

Drayton. Ay, but seest thou that, through the door, one that sits here can mark the whole company of ale-drinkers in the tap-room without, and therefore Shakespeare loved it ; here would he sit and note the humours of such guests as yonder Sly. For in such, he would say, you see humanity with its vizard off ; and he held that nurture, though it oft cherishes a good apprehension, yet as oft doth overlay and smother it. He hath said to me, pointing to the company without, “ If you find wit here, 'tis the bird's own feather, and no borrowed plume ; if you see courtesy 'tis inborn, and will bear the rub ; if you note a quaint humour 'tis in the man by the grace of God or the force of circumstance : your weaver or your tinker, whatsoever other gift he hath, hath not the skill to counterfeit, for that comes by art, and leisure, and commerce with men of condition, and desire of their good opinion ; wherefore methinks

I oft see deeper through your leathern jerkin than your satin doublet."

Hostess. Yea, here would 'a come many a time and oft, with Master Ben, that was full of quips as an egg of meat. "Mistress Quickly!" Ben would say (for so 'a called me, I know not wherefore), "set us in the Dolphin chamber;¹ and let us have a sea-coal fire," 'a would say—"and I will drink none if thou give me not a parcel-gilt goblet," whereby Master Shakespeare would cast at him out of 's eye a merry glint. "Hast thou thy plate yet?" Master Ben would ask me, "and the tapestry of thy dining chambers? Come, let us have Doll Tearsheet meet us at supper." "O Lord,¹ sir," would I say, "I know no Dolls nor Tearsheets neither;" but 'twas a merry man, I warrant you, tho' I did never know what his meaning was.

Drayton. These memories of thine breed but sad mirth in me now.

Hostess. Well-a-day, if there be not Sir Thomas and Master Thynne, rid from Charlecote,² and alighting. By your leave, kind sirs, I will go receive them. [*She goes out.*]

Drayton. Dear Walter, this stroke is so

¹ For the allusions here made by Master Ben, see the "Second Part of King Henry IV.," act ii. sc. 1.

² Charlecote, still the family seat of the Lucys, is some four miles from Stratford.

sudden that it bewilders me ; methinks I am dreaming ; I discourse, remember, reason, and so forth, and yet my brain all the while wrapt as in a cerement. Coming here with my thoughts full of him, sitting in this room where he and I have sat so oft, what could seem less strange than that he should enter and greet me ; and yet a little word hath made me know that to be impossible for all time.

Raleigh. Ay, sir, amidst my own pain I remember how you have been familiar with that divinest man, and must feel a far deeper sorrow than myself, that know him but in the picture my imagination hath formed ; and I perceive by the blank made in mine own present, what a void must be left in yours. Would you have us quit Stratford forthwith ?

Drayton. Nay, by no means ; let us rather give our sorrow somewhat to feed on ; let us fill it with the sad memories that abound here. For, to me, everything in Stratford speaks of Shakespeare ; 'twas here he lived, while that unmatched apprehension was most waxlike to receive impressions, when wonder and observation were quickest in him ; and 'twas here he began to fill a storehouse from whence to draw at will. For his manner was always to build on a ground of fact, or, rather, to sow fact like a seed, and let it strike in that rich soil till

oftentimes none but himself could tell (even if himself could) what the ripened fruit had sprung from. Sometimes he would limn a man in brief as he saw him, and, again, he would so play with his first notion, dressing it and transforming it, yet ever working even as nature works, that the citizen of Stratford or Warwick would grow into a Roman or ancient Briton, a lover or a king, a conspirator or a jester, compounded part of fact, part of fancy, yet would the morsel of fact leaven the whole with truth.

Raleigh. Was this Sir Thomas Lucy he whom the world calls Justice Shallow?

Drayton. Nay, he hath been dead these many years — this is his son; but the companion that's with him thou mayest have chanced to hear of.

*Enter SIR THOMAS LUCY and MASTER THYNNE,
in mourning habits.*

Hostess. Wilt please you walk this way, Sir Thomas? This chamber is warmer, and the day is fresh. There be here, sirs, none but these two gentlemen.

Sir Thomas. Master Drayton, as I remember me. You are of our county of Warwickshire, I think, sir?

Drayton. I am so, Sir Thomas, at your service. Give me leave to bring you acquainted

with my friend and comrade in travel, Master Walter Raleigh.

Sir Thomas. I salute you, sir. Of the Raleighs of Devonshire, mayhap?

Raleigh. The same, Sir Thomas.

Sir Thomas. An honourable family, sir, and one that hath borne itself among the best these many reigns past. You quarter the arms of Throckmorton, as I think, sir—you bear gules, five fusils, in bend argent, and your cognisance a stag; or is't a martlet?

Raleigh. I knew not we, being but simple gentlemen, and out of favour, were of that mark that our quarterings should be thus well known.

Sir Thomas. I am something of a herald, I would have you know, sir. Methinks 'twere well that men of quality were familiar each with the pretensions of all the rest, making as 'twere one family in condition: thus should we at once know who are of the better, who of the baser sort. And so, sir, of the leisure I spare from mine office as justice of the peace, and from mine own concerns, I give somewhat to heraldry.

Drayton. I perceive by the sad hue of your garments that you design to be present at Master Shakespeare's funeral.

Sir Thomas. Ay, sir. His son-in-law, Doctor

Hall, is our physician at Charlecote, and I have had dealings with himself, and held him in esteem.

Raleigh. 'Tis as it should be—the whole world should honour such worth as his.

Sir Thomas. Nay, good sir, I go not so far with you : though he were indeed so honourable that his neighbours, even of condition, may well accord him a last show of respect.

Drayton. I am glad that the old grudge between Master Shakespeare and Sir Thomas your father holds not in this generation.

Sir Thomas. Why, for that, Master Drayton, in respect of the deer stealing, 'twas not such a matter as is ne'er to be forgiven nor forgotten ; he was but a youth then, and he suffered for't ; and, for the scurril ballad concerning which the rumour went 'twas writ by Shakespeare, why, 'twas none of his.

Drayton. I'll be sworn 'twas not. Know we not the hand of the master better than to take such 'prentice-stuff for his ? As well affirm that a daw's feather may drop from an eagle.

Sir Thomas. Nay, sir, I have better assurance ; he himself, of his own motion, told my father (and hath repeated it to myself) that he ne'er wrote it.

Drayton. He hath told me the same—and for the plays——

Sir Thomas. For the plays wherein 'twas said he drew my father, 'twas idle gossip. How should a Gloucestershire justice, one Shallow (for such I am told is what passes for the portrait), represent Sir Thomas Lucy of Charlecote in Warwickshire?

Thynne. 'Twas said, too, that he had set me down along with mine uncle. By the mass! I should not care though it had been so; for I saw the play¹ once in London, and Master Slender was a gentleman, and an esquire, and of good means, though the people did laugh, I know not why, at some of his discourse. But he and the rest lived in Harry Fourth's time, 'twas said; and how could I live in Harry Fourth's time that go not back beyond Elizabeth? though the Thynnes were well thought on afore that, look you.

Sir Thomas. Well, sir, I have ne'er seen the play, and love not players. I ever noted that when they came to Stratford there was new business for the justices. The idle sort grew idler—they drew others on to join them that would else have been better conducted—there was less work, more drink, and more disorder. I could never away with the players, sir; and I was heartily with those who were for inhibiting their theatre in Stratford.

¹ "Merry Wives of Windsor."

Thynne. And I too, Cousin Lucy, I care not for the play, though, good sooth, I liked it well enough. But give me for sport a stage with two good back-sword or quarter-staff men ; or a greased pole with a Gloucester cheese atop ; or a bull-running : but of all sport, by the mass ! I love the bear-garden—man and boy, I ever loved it ; 'tis the rarest sport, in good sooth, now.

Drayton. Methought, Sir Thomas, when you talked of honouring my dear friend, 'twas for his works.

Sir Thomas. Nay, sir, I make no account of his works, and, indeed, know nought of them. He had won a good station, and maintained it, and therefore he should have his due.

Drayton. For his descent, that, as all men know, was not above humble citizen's degree.

Sir Thomas. His mother was an Arden ; and the College granted to his father a coat of arms, a spear or, upon a bend sable, in a field of gold—the crest, a falcon with his wings displayed, standing on a wreath of his colours, supporting a spear ; and he might impale with Arden. And the gentleman himself hath for years been of good havings, with lands and houses, and of good repute in all his dealings ; therefore, say I, that we who be neighbours and gentlemen, should have him in respect.

Thynne. Yea, forsooth! gentlemen should give to other gentlemen (thof they be new-made and quarter not) what countenance they may, for their better advantage, and to maintain them in consideration, look you, and to prosper them; and therefore 'tis we come to make two at the burial.

Raleigh. O ye gods! this of him that conceived Lear and Othello! Sirs, with your leave we will now bid you farewell.

Sir Thomas. Nay, I pray you that we part not so. I beseech you, Master Raleigh, and you, Master Drayton, that you lie this night at Charlecote. I would have you home to supper, and thank you, too, for your good company.

Thynne. And I, sirs, have a poor house of mine own within these dozen miles, and thof I be not a knight like my cousin Lucy here, yet I can lodge a guest as well as some; now that my mother be dead, I live as befits a gentleman, good sooth, and I would bid you welcome truly, now, and show you a mastiff that hath lost an eye by a bear.

Drayton. Sir, I thank you. For your good kindness, Sir Thomas, we are beholden to you; but, pray you, let us stand excused. Master Raleigh hath business that——

Raleigh. Nay, Master Drayton, that busi-

ness we had is sadly ended, and our whole journey marred. With your good leave, therefore, I would rejoice that we should take Sir Thomas at his word.

Sir Thomas. By my troth, sirs, I am glad on't, and you shall be heartily welcome. We'll e'en meet here at four o' the clock, and ye shall find wherewithal to bear you and your mails to Charlecote.

Raleigh. Till then, farewell. (*To Drayton as they go out.*) Seest thou not, Master Michael, that to sit in Master Shallow's house, perchance in his very arbour¹—to eat a pippin, maybe, of his own grafting—to look on his effigy, clad as he went to the Court with Falstaff—were a chance that would lead me to journey barefoot in the snow to Charlecote? For being here in the birthplace (alas! now the deathplace) of him I so revered, what better tribute can I pay (now that nought but his memory is left for our worship) than, even as thou saidst but now, to trace the begettings of those bright fancies which he hath embalmed for ever?

Drayton. You look on these things, Walter, as I would have you look; a true disciple art thou of him whom we shall always love and always mourn, and gladly will I go with thee to Charlecote. And now, ere we stand by that

¹ See "Second Part of King Henry IV.," act v. sc. 3.

greedy grave that is presently to swallow so huge a part of what is precious in England, we will see to that other business of thine, the raising of money for thee. 'Tis but a step, as I remember, to Master Sherlock's house. Now I pray thee mark that old man well—and if we deal not with him, as is likely, 'tis no matter, for I can take thee elsewhere; but I would thou shouldst see old Master Sherlock.

SCENE II.—*Master Sherlock's counting-house.*

SHERLOCK *sitting at his desk in an inner room.*

Enter DRAYTON and RALEIGH.

Drayton (aside to Raleigh). Dost thou not spy in him a likeness to an old spider, black, still, and watchful, and in that money-changing den to a cobweb? There be many flies have suffered loss of wings here.

Raleigh. How old and bent he looks! and, but that he be a money-lender, I should have deemed him poor.

Drayton. Nay, 'tis not a spider of the sleek sort—blood-sucking hath not fattened him as it doth some.

Raleigh. His attire doth not bespeak much wealth. That old gown were dear at two shil-

lings, fur trimmings and all ; nay, 'twere a fair price even were the velvet cap and copper spectacles thrown into the bargain.

Drayton. Soft you, he comes.

Sherlock. Sirs, your servant. What would you ?

Drayton. Marry this, Master Sherlock—me you remember—Michael Drayton—we have had some small dealings together of yore.

Sherlock. Ay, sir, I forget none who deal with me.

Drayton (aside). Nor they thee, I'll be sworn. (*To Sherlock.*) But thus it is—my friend here, Master Raleigh, hath had a manor in Surrey assigned¹ him by his father, Sir Walter, and having pressing need of moneys, inasmuch as he hath been appointed captain in a force which will shortly embark for Guiana, whereof Sir Walter is chief commander, he would raise a sum thereon to furnish him forth.

Sherlock. Be there none in London that would lend him the moneys ?

Drayton. Certes ; but he goeth now into Devonshire, and his need is pressing.

Sherlock. His need is pressing—well, sir ?

Drayton. To which end he would be beholden to you for a present loan.

¹ An estate in Devonshire, thus assigned to him several years before, had been confiscated by James I.

Sherlock. For a present loan—well, sir?

Drayton (aside to Raleigh). Mark you his manner of speech? 'twas ever thus with him. (*To Sherlock.*) And for security he hath brought the writings pertaining to the estate; till thou canst prove which to be sufficient, myself will be his surety.

Raleigh. These be they.

Sherlock. These parchments, these parchments—ay, ay—the Manor House—all these messuages and tenements—ay, ay. Well, sir, time is needed to examine these; what moneys dost thou require?

Raleigh. In brief, four hundred pounds.

Sherlock. Four hundred pounds—well?

Raleigh. If upon inquiry and advice the security satisfy thee, at what rate of usance wilt thou lend me?

Sherlock. Rate of usance?—why, sir, money is hard to come by at this time; we have suffered great fires in our town,¹ and money hath been needed for the rebuilding; the rate hath risen of late—and there is talk of war with Spain, which will raise it further. I must myself borrow ere I lend, and must needs pay roundly. I cannot supply you at a less yearly rate than fifteen in the hundred.

¹ There had been a conflagration in Stratford in 1614, which had destroyed a great part of the town.

Drayton. Nay, sir, my friend's need is not so great that he should pay so dearly. He laid his account for ten, and by my counsel he will give no more—for, look you, this is no venture, but a surety.

Sherlock. Then, I fear me, we deal not; but I will look into these writings—'tis possible I may be able to lend at fourteen and a half.

Drayton. Put up your papers, Walter, we will make other shift. This was but part of our business in Stratford, Master Sherlock; our intent was to visit your most illustrious townsman, and now, woe the day! we hear he is dead.

Sherlock. Ay, who may he be?

Raleigh. Who but Master Shakespeare, for whose burial you will straightway hear the bell toll.

Sherlock. I heard say he was dead.

Raleigh. Didst not know him?

Sherlock. We had dealings together years ago—ay, he hath had money of me more than once or twice; but he consorted with mine enemy, John-a-Combe,¹ and we would none of each other after.

Drayton. I knew not John-a-Combe was the enemy of any man.

¹ John-a-Combe was a rich banker in Stratford, and a friend of Shakespeare, to whom he left a small legacy.

Sherlock. He was mine enemy in the sense that he hindered my dealings. This Shakespeare, too, outbid me for the tithes¹ when they were sold. I had been a richer man had he died a dozen years ago. I spend not, therefore, much sorrow on him.

Raleigh. Why, this comes nigh to blasphemy—let us be gone.

Drayton. Well, God be with you, Master Sherlock, — (*aside*) though I fear that may hardly be. Come, Walter. But, Master Sherlock, a moment, I pray you; I saw your daughter, Mistress Visor, of late.

Sherlock. My daughter, Mistress Visor, ay!

Drayton. A woman, sir, that is held in much respect, though not for her worldly means. In truth, she hath but a sorry life of it.

Sherlock. She made her own bed when she fled from this house twenty years ago with young Visor. Let her lie on it, and if she find it hard, let her see that she complain not. The curse of disobedience hath been on her.

Drayton. Well, sir, she hath paid for that long ago, if misery may pay it. She looks like one that the world hath done its worst on, and is ready to quit it.

¹ Shakespeare invested a considerable sum in a lease of these tithes.

Sherlock. Sir, sir, I had thought you came here on a business matter. I have somewhat pressing to see to.

Drayton. One word, Master Sherlock. Her eldest son, your grandson, is a lad of promise, and for education she hath done what she may for him; but I heard of late that he was driven to hold horses in the market-place, and such chance shifts, for a bare living.

Sherlock. Let his father look to it; he took my daughter—let him look to his son—let him look to his son. (*To Raleigh.*) Will it please you leave the writings?

Drayton. Her daughter, near womanhood, is fair to look on, but——

Sherlock. Hast thou been set on to this? Your pardon if I quit you.

[*Retires into the inner room.*]

Raleigh. Come, let us away. So, I breathe again, now we are quit of that den. I have heard of such flints, but ne'er saw one till now.

Drayton. So thou carest not for his money at fifteen in the hundred?

Raleigh. Were't five I would not deal with him. 'Tis a stone, sure, that hath been cut in human shape and possessed by some vile spirit from the nether world. I almost marvel, Master Michael, that thou broughtst me to him.

Drayton. Why, was it not of our compact that I should show thee some of the models whence our master drew ?

Raleigh. Models ? how, Sherlock ? Yet that name. Soft you, now, soft you ! And money-lender, too. And then his daughter—why, Master Michael, 'tis clear as the sun—it runs on all-fours with the devil in the play ; and yet, but that thou gav'st me the clue, I might have borrowed money from him twenty years without guessing. Well, this passes !

SCENE III.—*The Churchyard of Stratford.*

A crowd waiting about the gate.

First Woman. Didst not hear say there would be a dole ? I see no signs of it.

Second Woman. 'Twas too good to be true ; comfort is chary of coming to poor folk.

First Man. I have been here since one o' the clock, and with a toothache, for which thou seest my face is tied up, and the wind is keen. I had stayed within four walls but for the word that went about of a dole.

First Woman. Thou look'st none the comelier, Peter Quince, for the clout about thy yellow chaps, like a blue dish full of butter-milk.

Second Man. Thou shouldst have covered the rest of thy face with it, Peter, then wouldst

thou have been fairer to look on than e'er thou wert yet.

Second Woman. I'll warrant thou eatest thy share when thou getst it, crust and all, in despite of thy toothache.

Peter Quince. Look if here be not lame Davy, coming for the sharing; how his crutch thumps in 's haste!—do but mark how he outspeeds blind Harry that feeleth his way by the wall.

Second Man. Ay, and look, Madge, my buxom lass, at what will please thee better, for here come gentlemen of worship.

Madge. The younger is as gallant a youth as e'er I set eyes on.

[*The bell tolls for the funeral.*]

Enter DRAYTON and RALEIGH.

Raleigh.

“No longer mourn for me when I am dead
Than ye shall hear the surly sullen bell
Give warning to the world that I am fled.”¹

How strange sound these words of his, with that bell for commentary! How his own phrases rise to the lips!

Drayton. Ay, Walter, you shall find but few occasions in life, solemn or merry, regarding

¹ The opening lines of Shakespeare's 71st Sonnet.

which something apt, something that goeth deeper than common to the heart of the matter, hath not been said by him that is now silent.

Raleigh. One that reads him as a student, and lovingly, as my father from my first youth hath taught me to do, and hath moreover a good memory, shall find in him (my father is wont to say) a rich vocabulary. But mark you the crowd here! 'tis the spontaneous respect of the people for so famous a townsman. Now look I to see (what we have not yet seen) the sorrow of Stratford for the loss of her great son. As the sun lights the hovel no less than the palace, so should his fame reach to, and warm, the poorest here.

Drayton. Be not too assured that his fame is of a kind to be felt by such as these, though were he a commander who had brought home a Spanish galleon, or a courtier who had set the fashions at Whitehall, or a foolish lord with fifty retainers at his back, no cap so greasy but it would cover an idolater. But let us mark what passes 'twixt the townsfolk and this old beadle who cometh hither with his older satellite.

*Enter a Beadle and Assistant-Beadle with
Servants bearing baskets.*

Assist.-Beadle. Neighbours, make way, I pray you ; stand aside from the gates.

Crowd. The dole, the dole ! Good Master Beadle, a word with you—me, sirs, me—look hither, 'tis I, &c.

First Beadle. What a consternation is here ! Make not such a clamour. We are charged, I and my partner, with the contribution of this dole, and we will contribute it without respect of persons, save that we will give most to those we think most worthy. Stand you back, Quince and Flute.

Quince. Yet do not overlook me, good Master Beadle.

Flute. Remember me, an't please you, Master Derrick.

Assist.-Beadle. Heard you not what Master Derrick said ? Would you set yourselves to teach him in this business ?

Beadle. Ay, would they, such is their vanity and their greediness. It might be thought they had ne'er seen a funeral before. When did any of you know me overlook one that should be remembered ? Have I been beadle here forty years for nought ?

Assist.-Beadle. Ye dare not say he hath for your lives.

Crowd. The bread! the bread!

Beadle. 'Ods my life, they would tear it out of the baskets, like wolves. Neighbours, though it be customary to give loaves only, yet Master Shakespeare, out of his love for you, and because ye should mourn him fittingly, hath desired that beef should be bestowed along with the bread.

Several. Worthy gentleman!

First Woman. Oh, good soul, this shall profit him, sure, where he's gone.

Second Woman. Nay, I ever said there were none in Stratford more rememberful of the poor than Master Shakespeare.

Assist.-Beadle. Ay, and more than that, there be four firkins of ale to be broached after the burial, behind the church.

Beadle. Neighbour Turgis, wilt thou still go about to forestall me? I was coming to the ale presently, when time fitted. Do thou stand by the baskets and give out the dole as I shall tell thee. Hast thou the bag of groats ready, too?

Assist.-Beadle. Yea, Master Derrick.

[*They distribute the provisions and money.*]

Flute. Shall I not have a loaf and a groat for my wife? She hath had twins this morning, therefore could not come.

Old Woman. Thy wife, forsooth!—my son hath worked at New Place, and helped to mend the fence i' th' garden last winter, and now is he rheumaticky and bed-rid. A dole for him, I pray you, sweet Master Derrick.

Beadle. Be not too forward, woman; thou art not too well thought on, I warrant thee.

Old Woman. Is acquaintance and service to count for nought?—'tis a shame, then.

Beadle. Quiet thy tongue, mistress; it may be I shall be called on to deal with thee in other fashion than doles. Thou art deputed by many for a witch, let me tell thee; thou art suspect of keeping a toad, and, moreover, 'tis thought thou hast a familiar, one Hopdance.¹ (*To another.*) But wherefore hangst thou back, Cicely Hacket,² thou that wast once a maid-servant at New Place? Press nearer, and hold out thine apron.

Cicely. Oh, sir, I came not here for the dole, but indeed to see the last of him who hath been ever kind to me and mine.

Beadle. The more reason thou shouldst have thy part. Let her do so, Goodman Turgis, for thou knowst that she that humbleth herself

¹ "Hopdance cries in Tom's belly for two white herrings. Croak not, black angel!" *Edgar* (*feigning madness*) in "King Lear."

² Cicely Hacket, described by Sly as "the woman's maid of the house," in the "Taming of the Shrew."

should be exhorted; and 'twere not ill, methinks, if thou gav'st her, moreover, a share for her sick mother. (*Calling through the gate to boys in the churchyard.*) Young fry, wilt thou leave leaping over the gravestones? else shall my staff and thy backs be better acquainted. I see thee, young Pickbone, drumming with thine heels on Mistress Keech's epithet; come off the stone, or 'twill be worse for thee, thou naughty varlet — and thy tall slip of a sister, too, I saw her but now up with her coats and over the railing of yonder tomb like any stag.

Drayton (to Raleigh). The oldest of these servants that came with the beadles is Shakespeare's own man Adam. I will speak to him. This is a sharp sundering for thee, Adam. Leave thy basket. Step aside, and speak with me of thy good master.

Adam. O Master Drayton, I looked that he should bury me: would I were with him! Were I young, I could ne'er hope to see such another master; and being old, I have no desire but to follow him.

Drayton. Was his sickness sudden?

Adam. Nay, sir,—I have foreboded, this many a day, how 'twas with him. He hath pined and dwindled, and then again he hath mended for a while and would walk abroad;

and ever with a kind word and a jest, as was his wont. But I found, from day to day, his step slower, his hand heavier on my shoulder, his breath shorter.

Drayton. Did himself look for his end?

Adam. Ay, sir; but made as though he had a long to-come before him. Four days since ('twas o' Sunday) he said to me, "Adam, I have a fancy about my burial; but say nought of it as yet to my daughter. I have here set down the names of those I desire to bear me to the grave;" which he thereupon read to me, and they are even now in the house, making ready.

Drayton. Some of note and condition, mayhap?

Adam. Not so, not so, not so, Master Drayton; there art thou wide indeed of the mark. Never trod man among men who looked on gentle and simple with a more equal brotherly eye than Master Shakespeare. A fine coat or a ragged jerkin made no more difference in a man, in his eyes, than whether his hair were black or brown. Nay, strange to tell of a man of his gifts, he seemed oft to find as much matter in a fool as in a wise man; he would take pleasure in discoursing with many a one of this town that simple I would have fubbed off as a lackwit. So he saith to me, "First have I set

down, to carry the head of my coffin, Hugh Bardolph and Corporal Nym,"¹ poor men, both, Master Drayton. Bardolph, one of many of the name here, was a tapster; Nym, a pensioner of the Earl of Leicester, in whose army he served in the Low Countries, though I did never hear with much credit.

Raleigh. Bardolph and Nym! O brave Shakespeare!

Adam. "Next," he saith, "I have set down John Rugby and James Gurney," ancient serving-men, your worships, and now almsmen.

Drayton. Whom in his plays he hath allotted, Rugby to Dr Caius²—

Raleigh. Gurney to the Lady Falconbridge.³

Adam. "After them Thomas Wart," an old fletcher of this town, sir—

Raleigh. One of Falstaff's ragged recruits he—

Adam. "And Kit Sly. And, to end the company, Snug the joiner,⁴ and Nick Bottom"—and, the list being thus ended, my dear master laughed so long and so merrily that I cried, "Sure one that can laugh so hath small need to name his bearers."

¹ See "King Henry V."

² "Merry Wives of Windsor."

³ "King John."

⁴ "Midsummer Night's Dream."

Raleigh. Truly did he make Romeo say—

“How oft, when men were at the point of death,
Have they been merry!”

Adam. “And be sure, Adam,” he said, “that thou have old Derrick, and his ancient comrade Turgis, to give out the dole—and see it be of good kind and plentiful.” And he charged me again I should not tell his daughter, Mistress Hall, of these dispositions—for wherefore, said he, should I add a few days, or hours, to her grief?

Drayton. Derrick is now in the sixth age, he is the *slipperd pantaloon*; and Turgis toucheth on the seventh, that of *second childishness and mere oblivion*—yet are they still the shadows of that pair whom men shall long smile at.

Beadle. Hath every one his portion?

Assist.-Beadle. Yea, Master Derrick.

Beadle. Then give what's over how you will, and make an end shortly, for we are needed at New Place.

Drayton. Do ye walk in the procession, Master Beadle?

Beadle. Of a surety, worshipful sir. The funeral might as well make shift without the coffin as without me and my partner; we walk before choir and parson, at the head of the

train; we be its eyebrows. And, neighbour Turgis, if thou shouldst walk half a foot or so to the rearward of me, 'twould be forgiven thee, for so would the people on both sides the way have me in view; and thou, neighbour, art old—and moreover small—and feeble, moreover—and thy port doth scarce beseem the van of a ceremonial, the gifts for which are, in truth, not given to all.

Assist.-Beadle. I will govern myself as thou desirest, good neighbour.

Adam. I have here herbs, for those who will bear them at the funeral. Will ye have cypress or rosemary, sirs?

Drayton. Thanks, good Adam; we will bear each a branch of cypress, and will long wear it in our hearts, too.

[The Beadles and Servants depart for New Place. DRAYTON and RALEIGH pass into the Church-yard.]

Drayton.

“Let's talk of graves, of worms, and epitaphs;
Make dust our paper, and with rainy eyes
Write sorrow on the bosom of the earth.”¹

[They enter the Church.]

¹ “King Richard II.,” act iii. sc. 2.

SCENE IV.—*The inside of the Church.*

Raleigh. I have seen many a great cathedral, both in England and abroad, holding the bones of kings and saints and heroes; but never one that enshrines dust so sacred as will this we stand in.

Drayton. 'Tis a fair church, and our poet might find many a less fitting resting-place than amid these pillars and arches, with the plash of Avon for requiem. Yonder, before the altar, yawns the dark portal through which he will pass out of our sphere. (*They approach the grave.*) What a wealth of ripened thought will be summed up here! what a world of promise is the future robbed of! This grave divides us not from one man, but from unnumbered men and women that might have taught and delighted us; it engulfs not one life but a multitude of unacted lives with their passions and vicissitudes; here will pass away not a solitary figure but a pageant. It may be that, so long as Time hath dominion here, he will never spare such another spirit to eternity.

Raleigh. Here doth the poet fulfil the prophecy he made through the mouth of Prospero, that other enchanter:—

“ I'll break my staff,
 Bury it certain fathoms in the earth,
 And deeper than did ever plummet sound,
 I'll drown my book ! ”

[*Chanting heard in the distance.*

Drayton. Those choristers tell us that he is on his last journey ; let us go meet the funeral train.

[*They pass out into the porch. The Funeral approaches the gate of the Churchyard. The Beadles walk first, the Choristers, in white robes, and the Minister follow, preceding the Coffin ; then the mourners, two and two, each bearing a branch of yew, cypress, or rosemary in one hand, a taper in the other. As the Choristers enter the Churchyard they begin to sing the following :—*]

FUNERAL HYMN.

I.

Part of our hearts thou bear'st with thee
 To silence and to dust,
 Fair hopes that now must withered be,
 Unfading love and trust ;
 So thou wilt lie not all alone
 Beneath thy monumental stone.

II.

No echoes of this fretful world,
No glimmer of the day,
Can reach thee, in thy shroud enfurled,
Thou canst not hear us pray,
Nor seest our tears, nor heed'st our moan,
Beneath thy monumental stone.

III.

The good thou didst thy brother here,
The evil put aside,
The victory gained o'er sloth and fear,
O'er avarice, hate, and pride,
These make the wealth thou still canst own
Above thy monumental stone.

IV.

With these for warrant thou shalt go
Where sorrows enter not ;
Still new thy paths, when here below
Thy sculptured name's forgot,
The roof decayed, the grasses grown
Above thy monumental stone.

Raleigh. Methinks, Master Drayton, these verses might better befit some good husband and father of the common sort, than Shakespeare, whose glorious intellect, shining through his works, is his indefeasible title to remem-

brance. To sing of him thus, is to speak of a falcon and say nought of her wings; to commend Behemoth for other qualities than his strength; to sum up Cæsar and forget his universal empire.

Drayton. It is apparent, Walter, that these good citizens believe they have in hand one who differs from them only in that his steps have lain in paths apart from theirs, even as an ostrich differs from a swan in strangeness rather than in excellence. Therefore it may seem to them that this hymn, which hath, doubtless, heralded many an honest alderman to his grave, may also serve very well for Shakespeare.

Raleigh. Tell me of the mourners: who is she that stoops her long hood so low between her taper and her branch of rosemary?

Drayton. His daughter, Mistress Hall; beside whom walks her husband. Next, with flushed, tear-bedewed face (yet with a corner of an eye to beholders, methinks), his other and younger daughter, the buxom Judith, married, 'tis two months since, to that comfortable vintner, Master Quiney, who trieth vainly to cover his natural contentment with a decorous mask of woe.

Raleigh. And who handleth his taper and his branch as 'twere a bottle and a glass. Sir

Thomas and Master Thynne I already know, but who are the next?

Drayton. He with the shrewd pale face and bushy eyebrows is Julius Shaw, with whom walks jovial William Reynolds—both friends and neighbours of Shakespeare; and after them come two other of his friends,—Antony Nash, whose face of gloom is the endowment of nature, and lendeth poignancy to his many jests—and Thomas Combe, son of John-a-Combe. The pair that follow are Hamnet and Judith Sadler, the god-parents of Shakespeare's twin-children. And marked you the austere aspect of the minister? he is one of the Puritan sort,¹ much thought of by the Halls, out of favour to whom he comes, doubtless, to do this office. The rest be town dignities, as aldermen and burgesses, and other townsfolk.

[*The Procession passes into the Church, DRAYTON and RALEIGH joining it, and the service begins. After prayers at the grave, the Minister preaches a short Sermon, which ends in this wise:—*]

“So, friends, having essayed to draw from

¹ Probably the same Preacher who is mentioned in old records of the Stratford Corporation as having been a guest at New Place a year or two before.

the presence of death in our midst some matter for edification, I will speak a word of this particular brother who hath departed, dwelling, as is at these seasons the custom, chiefly on what may do him grace, and serve to sweeten his memory in the nostrils of those whom he hath left still in the bonds of the flesh. And, first, of the fountain of his charities—it hath been known in Stratford for a perennial spring, abundant in refreshment to the poor, and in counsel and all good offices to those who needed countenance of another kind; and if (as must be said were a man to speak truly) he ever regarded necessity more than deserving, and inquired not over closely into the way of life of those he relieved—nay, would oftentimes succour and comfort the godless no less than the godly, and bestow his bounty where it was like to be ill-spent—yet is that to be accounted better than the withholding altogether of alms, as some use. Next, of his excellent charity of another sort, I mean the brotherly relation he held with all conditions of men; it hath been noted among you that he, who was used elsewhere to consort with the great, and hath been favoured even of princes, would yet converse with the lowly on a general level of goodwill, as if the only apparel he took thought of were the skin we are all born with; for which, in-

deed, he had great ensample. And, again, he hath ever gone among his fellows with a cheerful spirit, so that his presence hath been as wine among friends, and as oil among make-bates. And though I dare not say that he inclined of preference to the conversation of the godly, nor could be counted of the fellowship of saints, nor even a favourer of them, yet have I ever found him apt at serious converse, courteous in bearing, weighty in reply, and of unshakeable serenity when I have adventured to press the truth on him somewhat instantly; insomuch, that I, whose vocation 'tis to battle for the truth, have myself, ere now, been sore put to it to hold mine own, and found me in straits to oppose him, so nimble was his wit; though I doubt not that (the clear right being with me) I should, with time for recollection, have had vouchsafed to me the wherewithal to give him sufficient answer. And it hath, at these times, seemed to me that he was a goodly vessel full of merchandise, yet driven by the wind apart from the port where alone her cargo could be bartered for that which is bread; and I have travailed over him with a sore travail; for I have hardly doubted that, with such gifts, he might, had it been so ordered, have justly aspired to be chief magistrate of your town, or even to serve you in Parliament; or again,

with diligent study and prayer, to become a preacher of weight, and have struck in the pulpit a good stroke for God's honour and the devil's discomfiture. But, alas! it is known to all of you, and I dare not dissemble it, that his calling hath been one that delighteth the carnal - minded, and profiteth the idle, and maketh the godly sad of heart; while, as for his talent, it hath been put out to use where the only return is the praise which fleeteth as the bubble on the stream, and the repute which perisheth as the leaves of autumn; for the making of rhymes and verses which flatter the ear, and the art of representing the vain shows of things, howe'er skilfully practised (and I profess not to have that acquaintance with the writings called plays, nor poems other than godly hymns, to judge his handiwork), cannot be held profitable for him that writes nor him that hears them. And therefore, whatsoe'er of wit and sense they may contain must be accounted as water poured out on the sand, which, better bestowed, might have solaced the thirsty, and nourished the herbs and the fruits, whereof many would have eaten and been strengthened. But though I may not altogether hold my peace on these matters, yet am I loath to dwell on them at this time; rather would I point to the hope that our departed

brother had, in the soberer life he of late led among you, put aside such toys as unworthy, and given us warrant to forget in him their author, and, moreover, to believe that, had he been spared unto us, he would have removed himself further, year by year, from such vanities and lightnesses of his youth, until, haply, by the ensample of a godly household, and the ministrations of faithful expounders of God's Word, he should have attained even to the perfect day."

[*The Sermon ended, the Coffin is borne to the grave, the Minister and Mourners stand around, the service is concluded, and all depart from the Church.*]

SCENE V.—*The Street near New Place.*

Raleigh (*hastening to rejoin Drayton*). Your pardon, sir, for seeming to forsake you; I did but stay to throw my branch of cypress into the grave, and have kept only this handful, which I will preserve as a memorial, and make of it an heirloom. But, Master Drayton, I had some ado to refrain from answering that preacher even in the church; for I have somewhat of my father's bluntness, and cannot abide that folly or conceit, in the guise whether of honesty,

or religion, or philosophy, should go unchallenged; and here was a man who, having the vision of a mole, mistook Parnassus for a mole-hill, and went about to measure it with his ell-wand, and even thought to do men service by persuading them that the golden lights and purple shadows of the mountain, its fountains and dells, the forests that clothe it, the clouds that crown it, and the Muses that make it their haunt, are all vain illusions together.

Drayton. You shall find, Master Walter, as you grow older, that all greatness which is not gross and palpable doth require some keenness of vision to discern it; therefore doth fame oftentimes grow slowly, and from small beginnings, as when a man notes, of a sudden, in the else familiar aspect of the heavens, an eclipse or a comet, and others gather to him, till the crowd swells, and the rumour goes abroad of a portent. And thus will it be with the fame of Shakespeare, who had so much in common with common men that they accounted him one of themselves, as Mercury passed among herdsmen for a herdsman, and Apollo among shepherds for a shepherd.

Raleigh. Lo you, where the mourners of his household approach the house. Let us wait here while they enter, and I pray you beguile

the minute by telling me of them. Of what fashion is Mistress Hall?

Drayton. Susannah is, from a child, of an earnest nature and a serious wit. Learning little from books, she hath learned much from converse and observation, and so in her hath her father found a companion; somewhat retiring at first, but upon occasion speaking warmly with spirit; devout withal, capable of strict argument for conscience' sake, yet of a becoming humility; so that I have oft thought her father drew the Isabella of "Measure for Measure" from her, she being about twenty years old when 'twas writ; even her who says

"Let me be ignorant, and in nothing good
But graciously to know I am no better."

Raleigh. Is her helpmate worthy of her?

Drayton. A worthy man is Doctor Hall—who consorts with Susannah in piety as in love: one who, next his God and his wife, loveth his most honourable calling, and hath grown to a physician of repute here in Warwickshire, much sought after by great ones of the shire.

Raleigh. Taketh the fair Judith in aught after her father?

Drayton. Hardly, sir; though her twin-brother, Hamnet, who died young, was a child

of rare promise. The girl is sprightly, but of small depth or substance, favouring the mother. She might have sat for Anne Page, being about sixteen when her father drew Anne; and she is well matched with Master Quiney, whose wit o'ertops not hers, who is gay and jovial as becometh a vintner, taking pleasure in what pleases her. Marry, he hath the merit of being the son of her father's old friend Richard Quiney.

Raleigh. Sir, a nobleman might have fittingly found in her a mate, she being Shakespeare's child. But what of the wife who helped him to these daughters?

Drayton. 'Twas Shakespeare's mishap, sir (and I say it for your warning), to wed at an age when the fancy and heat of youth o'ercrow the judgment. He had seen few women, and none of the finest. Anne Hathaway, Shakespeare's elder by eight years, was buxom as Judith is now; his fancy dressed her in qualities not hers; the secrecy of their meetings lent a flavour of adventure; and so he became bound to one who matched with him as finch with falcon, in youth a country lass, in age a mere housewife, something fretful, but, in the sum, contented; and Shakespeare, who was of a temper to fit himself to what is, dwelt with her here in much kindness. But see—Doctor

Hall doth await us on the steps of the entrance.

Doctor Hall. Master Drayton, I pray you that you pass not by the house of your departed friend without entering; I beseech you, sir, you and your friend;—'twill be a kindness to come in. You shall not be excused, sirs.

SCENE VI.—*A Room in Shakespeare's House.*

DOCTOR HALL, DRAYTON, and RALEIGH.

Doctor Hall. Here, sirs, is my father-in-law's parlour, where he hath mostly abided in this last illness. Be pleased to sit while I fetch my wife, who will part with a few moments of her sorrow in seeing so old a friend. [*He goes out.*]

Raleigh. By Saint George, sir, the poet was bravely lodged! How rich the staining of this window, where, through the lower panes, we look on the garden! and above, there stands emblazoned the falcon with his golden spear, steel-pointed, that Sir Thomas told us of. This wainscot, too, is quaintly carved, and the chimney-front of a rich design. But, soft you now—whose graven portrait is this that hangs in the midst of it? By my troth, 'tis my father's!

Drayton. Ay, Master Raleigh; think not but

that the poet, with his wide embrace for his fellow men, took such merit as Sir Walter's near his soul. The daring that went forth on the unknown deep, the search for El Dorado, the finding of strange lands and stranger peoples, all these fired his fancy. 'Tis to our great mariners we owe the sweet magic of Prospero's isle, the innocence of Miranda, the savageness of Caliban, the witcheries of Ariel.

Raleigh. And above my father's hangs Bacon's; these Shakespeare looked on as he sat by the fire, and thus was homage done both to adventure and to thought. And on this side, engraven like the others, from a painting I have seen, hangs the Earl of Southampton's.

Drayton. Whereby is homage done to friendship; greatly and constantly did the Earl love Shakespeare. And here, when he sat by this window that looks on the garden, he saw on the wall opposite, the presentments of his more level associates—Ben Jonson, Marlow, Beaumont and Fletcher (twinned in one carven oak frame), Spenser, Sidney, and, lo you, mine unworthy self.

Raleigh. But what strange company for such progeny of the Muse are these others on the opposing wall! Calvin and Knox, Ridley and Jewel, and here, portrayed in chalk by a cunning hand, the divine who preached to us even

now. What do these godly men here? Did Shakespeare love them?

Drayton. Shakespeare, Master Walter, looked on Puritan and Prelatist as the wearers of certain garbs hiding men underneath; 'twas concerning the men he chiefly cared to inquire. 'Tis the Doctor and Mistress Hall who have solaced themselves by hanging these here; the Doctor hath long been a chief of that party in Stratford which, though it forsakes not quite the Church, yet holds by that corner of it which is nearest Geneva; and his wife, from her natural bent, leans to the austerer (perchance I should say, the more earnest) side of religion. But Shakespeare, in such matters, would, as Polonius advises, gives his ear to all, his voice to few, and tolerated the effigies of these grave divines without any special love for themselves.

Enter DOCTOR HALL, *his* WIFE, *their* young daughter ELIZABETH, *aged* eight, *and* SHAKESPEARE'S WIDOW.

Mistress Hall. Master Drayton, your pardon yet awhile if I cannot greet you—the seeing of you stirs up thoughts that rob me of all words.

[*She turns aside.*]

Mistress Shakespeare. O Master Drayton!—Son Hall, lead me to my great chair. Oh, what a loss is mine!

Drayton. Your loss is the world's loss too, good madam.

Mistress Shakespeare. Oh, sir, who will uphold me now, a poor, weak woman? Mr Shakespeare in his merry mood would say, "Come, thou'lt make a brave widow, Anne—who shall be thy next?" But Lord, sir, I'll ne'er marry again.

Raleigh. Kings, madam, might be proud of such a predecessor.

Mistress Shakespeare. Kings, sir! What should kings have to do with me! You are pleased to jest, young sir; though kings and queens, too, have looked with favour on Mr Shakespeare. But the funeral, Susannah—was all becoming? Did the sermon make good mention of my husband? And the dole—was all the dole given away? But oh, my poor brain! Master Drayton and his friend must eat somewhat. There is a stuffed chine. Oh, how he that's gone loved a stuffed chine! Here be the keys, Elizabeth; see the chine set forth in the dining chamber.

Drayton. Nay, nay, good madam, think not of us.

Mistress Shakespeare. But ye must eat somewhat, sirs, indeed, now. Daughter, dost know that my new black hood is sewn awry, and I can go not forth till it be straight? And for

drink, sirs, will ye a posset, or sack with sugar ? The wine is from my son Quiney's cellars, and of his choicest.

Drayton. Nay, Mistress Shakespeare, we will rather talk than eat or drink.

Mistress Shakespeare. O Master Michael ! seeing thee minds me of my youth, and of Shottery where my husband courted me—the bridge of the stream where he would await me ; but I can talk no more—I can but weep. Lead me forth, son Hall. Go not till you have eaten, Master Drayton ; do but taste the chine. O sweet husband ! [*The DOCTOR leads her forth.*]

Mistress Hall. Master Drayton, your pardon once again. I feel some shame at being thus o'ermastered—'tis not meet to let our spirits be held in dominion by a private sorrow—but when I think on him, my heart turns to water. But, Master Drayton, I have marvelled you came not to my father in his sickness.

Drayton. I knew not of it—think you I could have stayed from him ? I was far beyond rumour of his condition, and had come now, O heavens ! hoping to behold him and listen to him, as of yore.

Mistress Hall. Much and oft hath he talked of you ; for it was growing to be his chief pleasure to sit with old friends, or, they absent, to talk of them. His sickness, though it sub-

dued not his spirit, sobered it ; his mirth fell to the level of cheerfulness ; he was oftener silent and rapt ; and oh, sir, though I dare not aver it, I will yet hope that his thoughts were above.

Drayton. Trust me, Mistress Hall, 'twould be a narrower heaven than we should all hope for, where room and gracious welcome were not proclaimed for him. Think you his place can be elsewhere than with the greatest and best that have gone before ?

Mistress Hall. Oh, sir, 'tis that troubles me. Hath he not trusted overmuch to that bright intellect ? Hath he not been as one that looketh forth from his watch-tower, and beholdeth a fertile land, and a great dominion, and heedeth not that the foundations of the building are of sand ? Hath he not—but I will not speak of the thorn that, since he is gone, pricketh me sorer than before. He charged me, Master Michael, that you should see what writings he hath left behind. Would, oh would they had dealt with such things as only are of great price !

Drayton. Wrote he much in these latter days ?

Mistress Hall. Yea, often, and would call his pen the sluice without which his thoughts would o'erflow his brain, and perchance drown

his wits. But now, sir, I will take you to his own chamber, where I will show you the coffer wherein he kept his writings.

[DRAYTON follows her out — RALEIGH takes up a book.

Doctor Hall (returning). Your pardon, sir, for leaving you without company.

Raleigh. Nay, I had the best of company—even fancies about the great one that so lately dwelt here. Was this book his?

Doctor Hall. Yea, and one of the last he read in.

Raleigh. Right glad am I to hear it—and right proud will my father be to know that the book he wrote in his captivity was of the last studied by the man he hath ever esteemed the most illustrious of this age.

Doctor Hall. Thy father! the History of the World! you are then the son of Sir Walter Raleigh?

Raleigh. Ay, sir, I am but too forward to own that kinship.

Doctor Hall. Sir Walter's health must needs have suffered much wrong from his long imprisonment. I have heard that he hath been mightily shaken of an ague.

Raleigh. Ay, sir, one contracted years ago in the service of our king's famous predecessor.

Doctor Hall. Well is it said, put not your

trust in princes. I may tell you, sir, that I do strongly desire to see that time when none shall be so great as to o'ertop the law, and do think it better that the claws of kings should be pared, than that in their breath should lie the liberties of men. But I pray you, sir, hath Sir Walter made trial of the decoction of dittany, or of fumitorie, to correct the malice of this ague? I have made essay of the root satyrion, in like cases, and found his effects to be good.

Raleigh. I doubt not, sir, that all approved remedies have been used by his physicians.— Did Master Shakespeare suffer much pain?

Doctor Hall. His malady was wasting rather than painful, save that toward the last he was oft seized with a panting and passion of the heart which left him very nigh to death, for the which I found the syrup of gilliflower, and flower of marigold, in wine, of much avail; the juice of roses also doth greatly comfort the heart. But of your father. I have ever heard Sir Walter reputed for a gentleman of qualities the most diverse, as skill in war by sea and land, courtiership, and statesmanship, the poet's and the chronicler's art, and in all a master—some of which concern not greatly an obscure physician; but I have also heard that he hath a pretty knowledge of pharmacy.

Raleigh. He hath some skill in simples. But I pray you, tell me somewhat of Master Shakespeare, the hope of seeing whom fetched me hither, and, next to that lost contentment, will be the hearing of him from those he loved. Was not a play called the "Tempest" (which I have not yet seen imprinted) one of the latest of his works for the theatre?

Doctor Hall. I believe it was. It hath been told me that the famous cordial which bears Sir Walter's name¹ was administered both to the Queen and Prince Henry. I have the recipe writ down, but I doubt me whether I have the ingredients in just quantities. Can you advise me of this?

Raleigh. I think my memory may serve me so far. But, sir, 'tis Master Drayton's opinion, as he said but now, that such expeditions by sea as my father hath adventured may have caused conception, in the poet's fancy, of the story of that play.

Doctor Hall. It may be so: 'tis of a shipwreck and an enchanted isle, as I remember me to have heard; good sooth, Master Raleigh, there be so many evils in this world crying for redress, that I bestow not much thought on enchantments, and love-tales, and bygone his-

¹ A specific, or panacea, well known in that age as *Sir Walter's Cordial*, the ingredients of which are given in the text.

tories. (*Takes out a memorandum-book.*) First there be, in the cordial, of zedoary and saffron each half a pound.

Raleigh. True, sir. But talked Master Shakespeare greatly of his plays while he was busied in inditing them?

Doctor Hall. Perchance, to others who were poets; but, indeed, my business in life hath so little relation with what he writ that I did not greatly seek his confidence at such times. Now, regarding this recipe—as to the powder of crab's claws, I have set it down at fourteen ounces.

Raleigh. It should be sixteen, sir.

Doctor Hall. Why, there now, see, good youth, what a service you have done me; for just proportion is of the essence of a prescript, and I have hitherto compounded this rare remedy but imperfectly. Of cinnamon and nutmegs, two ounces,—cloves, one,—cardamoms, half an ounce,—sugar, two ounces.

Raleigh. All these be right.

Doctor Hall. I thank you heartily for your correction in the matter of the crab's claws. I will note it. (*Goes to write at a table.*)

Raleigh (to Elizabeth). Come hither, pretty one, and tell me thy name.

Elizabeth (whispering). My grandfather called me his Queen Bess; and said he would liefer be ruled by me than the older one. (*Aloud.*)

Didst thou not say, sir, thou wouldst like to hear of him from those he loved?

Raleigh. Ay, little maid.

Elizabeth. Then thou must talk of him to me, for he hath oft said 'twas me he loved best, and (*weeping*), I shall ne'er be tired talking of him.

Raleigh. Didst often bear him company, Bess?

Elizabeth. Ay, for my father goeth much from home, and when my mother was in her store-closet, or visiting the sick, my grandfather and I kept together, we and our two friends.

Raleigh. Who be they?

Elizabeth. Mopsa is one—this, look you, is Mopsa (*fetching a cat from the hearth*). When I would do her pleasure, I scratch her behind the ear, but my grandfather would always tickle her under the chin. Her father and mother were fairies.

Raleigh. How cam'st thou to know that, Bessie?

Elizabeth. She was left by them one night in the snow, where my grandfather found her, and brought her hither wrapped in his cloak; and he told me all the tale of how she left fairy-land—when there is time I'll tell it thee. And our other friend is Bobadil.

Raleigh. Is Bobadil a man ?

Elizabeth. Nay, surely you know he is a dog ; kind and civil to us, but with other dogs he quarrelleth and growleth, and then flieth from them in fear, loving not to fight. And I have a little horse which grandfather did buy for me, and a riding-coat like the Queen's maids, and, so long as he could, we did ride together.

Raleigh. Well, Elizabeth, I am going presently to the wars, and when I come again thou and I shall be married, shall we not ?

Elizabeth. Ay, if my mother will let me, for thou art handsome and kind.

Raleigh. Seest thou this chain round my hat, with the pearl clasp ? well, I have kept it for my lady-love, when I should have one—so 'tis yours—look, I clasp it on your neck for a token, and when we are wedded you shall tell me the story of Mopsa.

Elizabeth. Sure, 'tis the prettiest chain. I give thee for't these four kisses. I will go show it my grandmother.¹ [*She goes out.*]

Raleigh. Methinks, Master Hall, that Elizabeth might serve at a pinch for her grandfather's very faithful chronicler.

Doctor Hall. Ay, sir, better than most ; she bore him company ever when he was inditing,

¹ Elizabeth married, at eighteen, Mr Thomas Nash, and secondly, Sir John Barnard, leaving no children by either.

and oft at other seasons. For me, I did greatly love and esteem my good father-in-law, and we lived together in pleasant communion; but for the works which, as I have heard, those that make a play-place of this world find such content in, he ever knew that ceaseless warring with the diseases of the bodies, and (what is more) of the souls, of my neighbours, and care for those public matters in which I discern a way to a better condition of the world's affairs, have left me small leisure for fancies to which I am, good sooth, noways affected; therefore he spake not to me of them. But there is one sweet piece of work, of which (not to speak profanely) he was author, that I daily study with reverence and love—and hither it comes.

Re-enter MISTRESS HALL and DRAYTON.

Drayton. I am like the man in the fable who was privileged to look in the cave where a wizard had collected the treasures of the earth, and was so dazed that he could neither pouch any, nor even take account of what he saw. Only I know there be there, beside plays already acted though never imprinted, and others of which only false copies have gone abroad, a multitude of uncoined ingots and uncut jewels of thought, which that matchless mind hath

thrown off as in mere exercise and at breathing-time. What measureless delight will these bestow on the world! ¹

Mistress Hall. But I know not, sir, if the world shall ever see them. My father gave me no command in that matter, and it may be that I shall serve his memory better with pious men by keeping them private.

Drayton. Trust me, Mistress Hall, the holder of these shall owe a heavy debt to thy father's fame.

Mistress Hall. Nay, sir, what is fame that it must needs be satisfied at all hazards? the bandying of a name from one idle mouth to another!—praise as hollow and unavailing as the night wind sighing o'er an epitaph!—what profit or comfort is in such for the departed?

Raleigh. By heaven, madam, not so!—rather is fame the linking of far-off generations by the common bond of one great name: for the dead, it is a second life among men, in which earthiness is purged away, and what is imperishable carries—and, for the living, their just inheritance; so, to defeat Fame is to commit a double,

¹ Halliwell says, "According to Roberts, two large chests full of Shakespeare's loose papers and manuscripts" (belonging to a baker who had married one of his descendants) "were destroyed in the great fire at Warwick." Falstaff's speech, "I have given them away to bakers' wives, and they have made boulders of them," seems almost prophetic of this.

nay, a tenfold wrong. Her trumpet sounds no empty strain; 'tis the appeal against our baser promptings, the summons to action, the meed of achievement, the celebration on earth of the spirit's triumph over the grave: thus it maketh the music to which mankind do march, and which, silent, would leave them slaves.

Mistress Hall. Your words, young sir, are manly, but I know not if they be godly. Of what avail that men should march, if not heavenward? How poor be centuries of this fame of yours to one hour of that other life we look for! Think not, Master Drayton, that I am dull to the spell of my father's verse; as a maiden it enthralled my fancy and charmed mine ear; even now could I taste the delights of it; but I have come to know that in such enchantments lies deadly peril, and I must pass on with my fingers in mine ears. Feeling thus, I know not if, in conscience, I may give a voice to what he hath left, by utterance in books.

Drayton. I will not do battle with these scruples in the hour of your grief, but will trust to the future for overcoming them. Even if no new matter go forth, it were grievous to withhold the true versions of his plays.¹ Methinks I espy, in the depths of

¹ The corrected plays were first published seven years after, in the well-known Folio of 1623.

time, his image veiled, and mark the generations of men toiling to unravel his meanings, and piecing out his maimed verses, and clipt fancies, with guess-work; collecting the while, in pain and doubt, what unthreaded memories tradition may preserve of him. And I do fear me, that if some disciple be not found elsewhere, more devoted than any his birthplace affords, to tell posterity what manner of man he was, there may, in a brief space, and ere his fame hath reached its zenith, remain of this chief of English poets nothing but a wondrous name.

[DRAYTON and RALEIGH take their leave,
and quit New Place.

SCENE VII.—*The Dolphin Chamber in the Falcon Tavern.* DRAYTON and RALEIGH.
Through the open door, those who were Bearers at the Funeral are seen drinking in the Taproom.

Enter HOSTESS *with a bottle of sack, glasses, small loaves in a basket, and a plate of anchovies.*

Drayton. This small refection will bring us handsomely to supper with Sir Thomas. So, hostess, now fill to Master Raleigh—and to

each a crust. What do these roysterers without?

Hostess. Sir, Master Shakespeare, who was ever full of kind thoughts and maleficence, left it in 's testament that the bearers should be entertained at the Falcon with cakes and ale after the burial; and in truth, sirs, they have borne themselves like men this hour past; they drink rarely.

Drayton. What a coil the varlets keep! Let us listen to them.

Sly. Well, a health, boys, to Master Shakespeare, wheresome'er he be.

—(*Sings*) *And we'll trowl the brown bowl
To the health of his—*

Bardolph. Nay, no singing, except any man knoweth a virtuous psalm-tune.

Nym. The fitting humour is—melancholy, and pass the ale.

Sly. Are we to be mute, then, in our drink, like fish?

Bottom. Let us discourse, but no revelry. Let us suit our matter to the occasion, and enjoy the good liquor sadly. Yet, methinks, I could sing something to the purpose.

—(*Sings*) *Out flieth breath,
In cometh Death
With his candle, bell, and book—a,*

*With his prayer so loud
And his woollen shroud,
And his cell in the churchyard-nook—a.*

Sly. A less comfortable song I ne'er listened to. I am of the party of silence rather than this.

Bottom. I can be silent too, an it comes to that, as well as e'er a man of you.

Bardolph. More ale, hostess. What, must I take to my old trade again, and turn tapster?

Wart. Canst thou mind, Rugby, when the play was held in John-a-Combe's great barn at the end of Chapel-lane, many years ago?

Rugby. Ay.

Wart. There was somewhat played then, writ, 'twas said, by Master Shakespeare, that would have served our turn now; something of ghosts and a burial.

Rugby. Was't not the play of "King Hamlet"?

Bottom. Ay, that or else the goodly tragedy of "Makebate."

Bardolph. To see Master Shakespeare sitting there on the bench nighest the stage, with his daughter, Mistress Quiney that now is, beside him, and to think the play he looked-on at was writ by himself—by heaven! 'twas as a man should say—wonderful.

Wart. I ne'er saw "Makebate," but I saw another. I was lingering by the play-house door with Margery my wife one night, thinking to peep at the stage through a chink in the boards, when Master Shakespeare comes me down the lane. "Art for the play, Wart?" quo' he. "Nay, sir," quo' I; "no pay no play, and my pockets are e'en like Skinflint's pot." "Never stay for that," quo' he; "thou shalt pass, and Margery too, as freely as coined silver—and I hope, Margery, thou'lt lay the play to heart, for they tell me thou lead'st Wart a terrible life of it." Now, the play, sirs, was of a masterful woman whose goodman got the better of her. Marry, 'twas named—let me see—by the mass, 'twas—

Rugby. Was't not named the "Turning of the Screw," or some such?

Several. Ay, 'twas so indeed.

Bottom. Nay, if you are for remembering names, my masters, I am he that can serve your turn. 'Twas named the "Quelling of the Scold"—'twas, as Wart truly said, the history of a crowing hen that had her comb cut, as all such should.

Sly. When wilt cut Goodwife Bottom's, Nick? Folk say she playeth Chanticleer to thy Partlet.

Bottom. Folk say much, neighbour, that it

beseemeth not a man of sense to hearken to. But touching these plays—I am all for the love passages ; it giveth one, as 'twere, a yearning ; it maketh one feel young again—the billing, now—and the sighing. I have played the lover, neighbours, both on the stage and off it, when my sweetheart hath borne her most tenderly.

Wart. I also was loved in my youth.

Sly. Thou loved ! was there ne'er a scarecrow in the parish, then, to set heart on ?

Hostess (entering with fresh ale). Nay, fub not the goodman so, Christopher—thou art ever girding. I warrant me, neighbour Wart hath had his cooings and his wooings like the rest, and could tickle a maiden's ear as well as another. What ! have we not all been young !

Nym. Well, for me, I care not for the love-humours—there is a mawkishness and a queasiness in over-much ogling and lipping. I am for your deadlier humours ; give me a murder, now—or the witches.

Wart. I love the witches, too.

Bardolph. Since ye talk of witches, saw ye Goody Broom at the burial to-day, hanging on the skirts of the crowd, and lurking behind a gravestone, wiping, the while, her old red eyes with the corner of her ragged cloak ? I am well persuaded that Master Shakespeare had

no truer mourner than that same ancient leman of Lucifer.

Hostess. And well she may, poor soul ! Between water and fire there was like to have been soon an end of her, but for Master Shakespeare.

Wart. Well, I was one of those that ducked her i' the pond ; and I ran a needle, too, into a mole she had, and she winced not—a sure sign of a witch ; but when Master Shakespeare stept forth and bespoke us, I felt I know not how at his words, and made home an 'twere a dog that hath been caught in the larder.

Snug. And when they haled her before the justices, Sir Thomas was for burning her, had not Master Shakespeare o'ersuaded him.

Sly. Well, he saved her then, but she may chance have her whiskers singed yet. I am not one that favours witches, any more than our good King, and I shall keep eye on her.

Hostess (entering the Dolphin chamber). Sirs, here be Sir Thomas's men, and the horses, awaiting you in the yard.

Drayton. Thanks, hostess—our score. Now, Walter, set on.

Raleigh (passing into the taproom). Good friends——

Bottom. Hear him ! hear him !

Raleigh. Good friends, all simple as ye sit

here, ye have this day done an office that the foremost nobles of England might envy you, and that might make their children's children proud to say—our forefather was one of those who bore Shakespeare to the grave.

Bottom. Sir, we did it passing well, and becomingly, but we boast not of it.

Bardolph. 'Sblood, sir, to be a bearer is no such great matter—and for nobles, why, we have been paid with one each, and are content.

Raleigh. Ay, ye have had greatness so near ye, that ye saw it not—ye are as daws that build in a cathedral and take it for an old wall. But I blame ye not—your betters have seen no clearer. And now, to show my goodwill for ye, as those whom Shakespeare hath sometime honoured with a word or look, I will entreat Master Drayton to lodge for me a sum with his friend Master Quiney, which shall suffice to let ye all meet and carouse here once a-month, for a year to come—and each year that I live¹ will I do likewise—and ye shall call it Shakespeare's Holiday.

Bardolph. By heaven! a most noble gentleman, and of a choice conception.

Nym. This humour likes me passing well.

¹ At the close of the following year he was slain, sword in hand, gallantly fighting the Spaniards, on the banks of the Orinoco.

Sly. I would there were more of your kidney in Stratford.

Bottom. I will invent a new speech every year in your lordship's honour, and every year it shall be more excellent than the last. My masters, let us, all that can stand, attend these gentles to the door.

All. Farewell, gallant sirs.

Raleigh and Drayton. Good friends, farewell.

MR DUSKY'S OPINIONS ON ART.

'Blackwood,' July 1858 ; a time when certain small books, containing summary judgments, of a very trenchant kind, on the works exhibited in the Royal Academy, were appearing every year.

"I am a blessed Glendoveer :

'Tis mine to speak, and yours to hear."

—*Rejected Addresses.*

IT is quite clear that the Glendoveer of the above couplet was commissioned to deliver to the world a divine message about Art. I argue thus on account of the air of absolute and uncompromising authority with which he announces the conditions of his teaching, Art being a subject on which two opinions ought not to be permitted. To the culpable neglect with which this high commissioner from the Court of Nature was probably treated by the vain and self-sufficient artists of the time, is

chiefly to be attributed the lamentable state of Art in general, and Painting in particular, up to eight or ten years ago, when I took up the subject. Since then I am happy to observe that all artists gifted with any degree of talent, and all the public possessing the slightest measure of judgment or reflection, have followed the paths I have so clearly indicated. Of course, as very few artists possess any talent whatever, and the great body of the public is, and must long continue to be, utterly deficient in the qualities I have mentioned, both the authors of fine works and those who patronise and admire them must expect to remain in a minority conspicuously small. But let them be comforted : for as in the stillness and splendour of a summer's evening, when the golden torrents, rushing from their fountains in the west, bathe the sky up to the zenith, where commences that pale green which heralds the approach of twilight, the chirpings of a few grasshoppers resound shrilly amid the glittering grass, while whole armies of sensual caterpillars, mutely feeding on leaf and flower, crawl unheeded ; so, by perpetual self-assertion, and utter contempt of all antagonistic sentiment, may the prophets of Art and their disciples secure to themselves, even among the undiscerning, a share of attention immeasurably greater than their mere

numbers or consideration would entitle them to claim.

Without affecting any diffidence which in me would be transparent pretence, or any misgivings as to any opinion I have ever delivered, yet I find it necessary to be cautious in wielding, as I annually do, the trenchant weapon of irresponsible criticism, lest, in its whirlwind evolutions, it might haply lop a limb from some humble but trusty follower. It grieved me much to find that a single word of censure uttered by me some years ago, and which, though perfectly just, was too keen and searching for the sensitive nature of the artist whose work I was criticising, had the effect of causing him to abandon painting as a profession, and to revert to his original calling of an oil-and-colour man, in which I hear he is realising a moderate competence. Excellent, therefore, as it is to have a giant's strength, it will be easily understood how cautious I must be in the exercise of the perilous gift; and when I refrain from noticing a picture in which I find nothing to praise, it is either because I am unwilling utterly to crush and destroy a painstaking though erring artist, or else because, the painter being a personal friend, I prefer gently correcting him in the privacy of social converse to publicly gibbeting him. By these remarks I

wish to guard against the imputation of hesitating in, or shrinking from, the formation of decided opinion on the merits of any picture that ever was painted, which I am always ready to accomplish at the shortest notice, my conclusions being generally directly opposite to those which would be arrived at by most other persons, or, in other words, by those less confident than myself in their own infallibility.

The first thing that strikes me, in the work of the present year, is, that though all other seasons and times of the day are reproduced in landscape (except the pitch-dark of a winter's night, which it would be difficult for any one, in the present state of art, to place satisfactorily on canvas), yet that particular state of the atmosphere which exists in the month of August from about five minutes before two to about twenty minutes after, when the sun's sultry and lavish splendour is tinged with some foreboding of his decline, and when Nature is, as it were, taking her siesta, is nowhere sought to be conveyed. I thought, on first looking at a small picture in the east room of the Academy, that this hiatus had been filled up; but, on further study, I perceive that the picture in question had been painted rather earlier (about five-and-twenty minutes before two is the time I should assign to it), and is therefore deficient in many

of the chief characteristics of the remarkable period I allude to. How comes it, too, that, amid all the rendering of grass and flowers, there is not a single dandelion—a flower which has often given to me, no less than to Wordsworth, “thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears;” nor a group of toadstools, which can give interest to a foreground else bald and barren; nor, among the minute studies of insects, a daddy-long-legs, swaying delightedly across the path, and dancing to inaudible music, as the mid-day zephyr waves the slender fabric of his gossamer home. I am surprised, too, to find (so far as my survey has enabled me to note) that there are nowhere any frogs, though every artist who painted out of doors in the first warm days of spring must have heard their choral music from the neighbouring ditches. The old heralds, speaking of the manner of the frog’s holding his head, talk of the pride and dignity, or, as they phrase it, “the lording” of frogs, and gave them a place in heraldry; and their ideas are generally valuable to artists, and worth studying, both for their literal exactness and their allegorical significance. Let us have some frogs next year.

No. 18.—“A Man Washing his Hands” (J. Prig). A step in the right direction. The painting of the nail-brush, showing where fric-

tion has worn away and channelled the bristles in the middle, is especially good. But how comes it that, the nail-brush having been evidently made use of, the water in the basin is still pellucid, with no soap apparent either superficially or in solution? This oversight I should not have expected in so clever an artist. Even granting clearness to the water, the pattern of the bottom of the basin visible through it is of a different character from the exterior of the vessel, which is not the case in any specimen of that particular delf which has come under my notice.

No. 24.—This is directly imitative both of Titian and George Cruikshank, with Smith's handling, and a good deal of Brown's manner.

No. 29.—As I told this artist last year, he is deficient in fulness of form and looseness of texture. He should, therefore, for some years, paint nothing but mops of various colours (without the handles), which would give him woolliness and rotundity. On the other hand, the painter of No. 32 has too much of these qualities, with too little firmness in his darks; and I should recommend him, as a counteracting influence, to study only blocks of coal—not the common coal (which is too dull), but the kennel or candle coal—a perseverance in which practice he will find attended by the happiest results.

“The Nativity.” — This is nearly perfect. The infant, which at first appears to be wearing a broad-brimmed straw-hat, is distinguished by a peculiar halo, in which there is no trace of servile imitation of those absurd pretenders known as the old masters. Thoughtless and superficial observers have objected to the angel holding the lantern, as an office inconsistent with the dignity of the angelic nature ; saying, too, that the act has some officiousness, since the lantern might have been placed on the ground or hung on a nail. For my own part, I consider the idea eminently happy, and if one of the other angels had been represented as snuffing the candle with her fingers, my admiration would have been complete.

No. 40.—The sky is weak and heavy, the distance too hazy, the middle distance absurd, and the foreground like a cartload of bricks ready for use. However, on the whole, I consider this the leading picture of the year.

No. 501.—I was nearly overlooking this picture, which at first sight seemed unworthy of notice, when a second glance showed me what I conceive to be the print of a man's shoe in the dust of the high-road in the corner of the foreground. This little incident gives poetry to the whole composition, and is quite equal to the memorable invention of Defoe, when he

makes Robinson Crusoe discover the print of a foot in the sand. The shoe, a hobnailed one, evidently belongs to the owner of the little white-walled cottage in the middle distance, the smoke from whose chimney curls bluely upward against a sky which has in itself nothing remarkable, but which the late J. M. W. Turner would have filled with magnificent cloud-forms of grandest outline and miraculous colour. One feels at once that the wearer of that shoe was one of our conscripts, fighting our battles against the barren swamp and the dull clod, and that, toilworn and careworn, he passed, in his victorious march, up that dusty road, to the domestic haven where rest, if not glory, awaited him.

“ There were his young barbarians all at play ;
There was their Saxon mother—he their sire,
Sweating to make a rich man's holiday.”

It reconciles me in great measure to the inequalities of the gifts of fortune, and to the necessity that almost seems to exist for a class which takes on itself the manual labour of the world, when I consider that we derive from thence the elements of purest pathos in art.

No. 520. “ Venus and Adonis ” (D. Corum, R.A.)—The great charm for me in this picture is the total absence of all sensual imagination in its treatment. The goddess, purified from

all taint of earth-born passion, with the immortal light of divine friendship beaming in her lustrous eyes, invites the reluctant youth to seat himself beside her on the glowing couch of amaranths and asphodels (with some gentianella and one or two ragged robins skilfully introduced), which have sprung responsively to the pressure of her roseate feet; while, in the distance, the fatal boar is seen, whetting against the trunk of a blackthorn in full blossom, the remorseless tusks which are shortly to be imbrued in the stream of the boy's young life. A similar purity of thought distinguishes the "Susannah and the Elders," by the same artist, and quite marks a new epoch in art. The Elders, grave men of most reverend appearance, approach the beautiful woman in her bath, evidently for the purpose of studying the flowing outline of her form and the delicate articulations of her joints (the ankles are especially well drawn). Lovers of exalted art, they come, with words of courteous greeting on their lips, to study in leisure and privacy the combinations of lines and gradations of flesh-colour with which Nature in her most perfect efforts delights to exercise the reasoning powers of man; while the matron, "clothed on in chastity," calmly awaits their coming. The "Satyrs and Nymphs Dancing," by the same hand, is equally removed

from the gross impurity which the subject would have derived from the licentious Poussin, and the hideous immorality of a modern quadrille. "Potiphar's Wife" is another illustrious instance of the power of Mr D. Corum to give new life to old subjects. The wife of the great Egyptian noble holds in her hand a roll of papyrus covered with specimens of early Egyptian art, to which she seeks to direct Joseph's attention (by the by, the style of these drawings, especially the man in profile with two eyes, belongs to the time of the later Pharaohs, and not to the pre-Mosaic period); but without success, for the youth, in whose countenance the struggle between curiosity and bashfulness is exhibited in a very remarkable manner, turns resolutely away from his kind instructress. Altogether the treatment of the whole of these works reminds me strongly of the manner of Fra Puritano.

No. 603.—I formerly had some slight hopes of this artist, and consequently bestowed on him a word or two of advice. But as he seems systematically to defy every principle I have ever laid down, and obstinately to ignore every opinion I have ever enunciated, his whole method has of course become hopelessly and irredeemably vile, and his works are in painting what ribaldry is in literature.

No. 650.—This artist had better go without delay to Venice. He will find in one of the vaults of one of the churches there (I forget which) a picture without a name, but which I know to be an indubitable Paul Veronese. The whole composition is fine; but I would particularly note the third hair from the top in the right whisker of the cat in the corner, the painting of which is very precious. This he should study in a reverential spirit, and I will answer for the result.

“The Dead Stonebreaker.”—On nothing have I ever insisted more strongly than on the absolute necessity of painting altogether in the open air, with all the accessories of the scene that are to be transferred to the canvas actually present; and here I am happy to see an illustration of the good effect of following my advice. I have no doubt that this picture was painted strictly under these conditions. Ribald critics may perhaps object that, as atmospheres of that extreme purpleness (as if mulberry-juice were substituted for the ordinary vehicle) are very rare, and that as the mere work of the picture must have occupied several weeks, these infrequent opportunities must have extended over a great length of time, during which the deceased stonebreaker would have become a skeleton, while the weasel could scarcely be

expected to remain so long looking at the body. Nevertheless I adhere entirely to my opinion ; and I am thus reminded of one particular count of the heavy indictment I formerly brought against that perverter of nature and impostor in art, Claude Lorraine. I pointed out that in a picture of his in the National Gallery, the shadows of two different objects are falling in opposite directions ; and this I noted as a blemish, or rather one amid a mass of blemishes. I now perceive that this was owing to the fact that, for once, Claude was honestly studying from nature out of doors ; and being absorbed in his miserable work (for the absorption of the artist in his efforts by no means depends on their value), he did not perceive that the sun, which was on his left hand when he began to paint in the morning, had gone round to his right before he left off, and consequently threw the shadows in the opposite direction. This is the only occasion on which I have ever found it necessary to alter an opinion I had once expressed ; and I freely admit that what I formerly censured I now consider the sole merit to be found in this painter's numerous works, and he is entitled to so much posthumous fame as my approval in this solitary instance can confer.

No. 902.—A fine example of what may be

called the botanico-geologico-astronomico style of art. Here the primeval masses of the old red sandstone, the granitic boulders, which, ere they became fixed for ever, hissed in fierce fusion round the sweltering materials of the chaotic globe, the grey slate, the gneiss, the feldspar, and the gypsum, lend their multiform variety of outline to the harmonious forms of the foreground ; while, in the coal-strata of the extreme distance, methinks I can descry the faint impress of ferns and other vegetable deposits. Note the fossil tooth of the mastodon in the centre as particularly precious, finely relieved as it is against the leathery texture of the wing of the pterodactyle. These superb combinations of the dædal forms of the earth are clothed in lavish magnificence with all known and possible specimens of herbaceous life, from the stupendous Wellingtonia to the small celandine of our native fields ; while over all are set the sentinel stars Orion and the Pleiades, which shed over the dawn of creation the same sweet influences that still gild its decline. The naturalist may study this picture with profit, only second to that derivable from a knowledge of the works of the late J. M. W. Turner, as expounded by myself. Still there are some natural features not to be found in

European landscape, of which I lament the absence. I should therefore recommend the artist to spend the summer on the top of the Peter Bott Mountain, while he may get a suitable foreground in the rich autumnal splendours of the trackless South American forests ; and may, on his return, paint in the less important details from the Botanical Gardens in the Regent's Park. I wish him a pleasant trip, a stout heart, walking-stick, and pair of shoes.

“Red-deer,” by Landseer.—I have already told Mademoiselle Rosa Bonheur, that as she has not yet satisfactorily proved to me that she can paint a man's face, it is a delusion to suppose that she paints horses ; they are merely trotting bodies of horses ; so I tell Landseer, that as he has never (that I am aware of) painted a porcupine, it is a popular fallacy to suppose that he can paint red-deer. He merely paints their horns, hoofs, and hides.

I have now given the public all that it is necessary for them to know, and more than they can appreciate, of my decisions on the Art of this year. The above pictures are all that I have had leisure to look at. Still, the mere fact of my not having seen them, would not prevent me from criticising all the rest, if it were expedient or necessary. On the whole, I

consider the works of this year decidedly in advance of those of the last, as that was of its predecessor, which I attribute to my annual critiques; and I doubt not that, after diligent study of this little brochure, considerable progress will be manifested next summer.

VICTOR HUGO ON THE GREAT FRENCH PUZZLE.¹

THE French ought to be the most ingenious people in the world. There is a great standing problem on which they have been sharpening their wits for fifty years, and which is likely to be their intellectual grindstone for fifty more. That problem, the national squaring of the circle, is, *How to explain away the Battle of Waterloo*. There it stands, a most substantial landmark in the century; a *pièce de résistance*, on which, it is evident, many an expositor, historical, philosophical, military, or merely patriotic, may cut and come again. It will evidently bear no end of explanation. Theories the most ingenious are brought to bear upon it; it is obscured for a moment, every now and then, in a haze of cloud or gossamer; but the

¹ 'Les Misérables.' By Victor Hugo. Vol. iii.

next moment there it is, "like Teneriffe or Atlas unremoved," ready for a fresh essay of subtlety. While other people see the matter in an ordinary light, a French writer, when he directs his mind across the Belgian frontier, enters a land of enchantment. The old men see visions and the young men dream dreams. What Britain was to Arthur, the Tauric Chersonese to Jason, or the domain of an enchanter to Orlando or Amadis, such is the marvellous region that lies beyond the Sambre to Napoleon. It is a kind of cosmopolitan Pandemonium—a land where evils gathered from all the mythologies are assembled to oppose the Emperor and his army of knights-errant. Fates and hostile powers from the poetic world of Greece—destinies from Arabia and stars from Chaldæa—pitfalls and delusions from the domain of chivalry, a pagan necessity and a modern French Providence, are all arrayed on the road to Brussels to harass and disconcert one conquering mortal. It is true there were also a couple of armies of material foes—but these are for the most part set aside and disregarded, the real opposition being made by the darker powers. Into this tremendous region Napoleon plunged, and into it plunge also the French chroniclers, boldly abandoning the prosaic domain of fact, and finding unlimited space for the play of fancy.

In this strange land may be discerned a blundering demon, called in French mythology Blucher, and a most besotted enchanter of the name of Wellington, both full of impotent malice, and devising, in their blindness, snares for others into which they are always falling themselves. They lead hosts of inferior demons, who are constantly getting themselves into trouble by their spiteful opposition, who are belaboured, overthrown, cut to pieces, and massacred, and betray not one single demoniac attribute except malignity, and a remarkable power, on some occasions, of reappearing, after all their losses, in their original numbers. Amid these the good Corsican knight moves triumphant. Before him and his invincible followers these foes everywhere recoil—myriads fall “even in the fan and play of his fair sword”—and he goes through the diabolic *mêlée* like Mr Greatheart through the Valley of the Shadow of Death. The demon Blucher privily prepares a snare at Ligny, in which he is himself entrapped, and made a terrible example. The foul wizard Wellington constructs another pitfall at Quatre Bras, into which he would inevitably have descended head foremost, but for the interposition of a malign power which blinded the eyes of two of the French knights, Ney and D’Erlon, causing the one to boggle vainly before the

wood of Bossu, and leading the other far astray by magical devices. But at the approach of the victorious Napoleon the wizard retires in confusion, feeling himself detected, and everything would have gone well but for the delusions of which the knight Grouchy is made the sport. He is pursuing the discomfited demon, Blucher, who is believed to be driven headlong in one direction, but who, aided by supernatural power, and lost even to such small sense of virtue and propriety as a demon may be supposed to retain, vanishes, leaving the pursuer to chase a shadow, and reappears at a critical moment to aid the stupid enchanter Wellington. From this epoch all is mystery and confusion. The devices of Wellington, though no less malignant, are also no less futile, than before. In his foolish craftiness he has placed himself where there is no escape. Behind him every avenue is closed—before him is his dazzling and all-conquering foe—all that is left for him is to display the dogged obstinacy suitable to such a situation, which, accordingly, he is said to have shown. But no amount of obstinacy could prevent his discomfiture. His feeble plans are easily seen through, and promptly disconcerted—his weak array is dispersed, overturned, cut up, crushed, broken, and destroyed. The peerless knight Ney careers triumphantly over the field, while

the above participles become more and more emphatically descriptive of what happens to the foe. But now the dark powers of the air begin to take part in the conflict. According to some chroniclers, Destiny it was that intervened. Others ascribe the disaster that followed to the desertion of the goddess Fortune from the side of the Emperor. There is also a mysterious If, that plays a conspicuous part in this crisis. All authorities agree that *if* something had not been done which was done, or *if* something had been done which was not done, the whole event would have been totally different; though most of them disagree as to what it was that should or should not have been performed. However, generally, it may be stated, that if foes, vanquished by every rule of conflict, had not inopportunately reappeared to renew the struggle, and if those followers of the Emperor who had unhappily been expended in the fight had been forthcoming when most wanted, and in particular, if the knight Grouchy had not been basely beguiled by the demon Blucher, all would have been well. Many chroniclers, indeed, persist in stating that all *was* well in reality, and that what passes for the history of subsequent events is necromantic illusion; but, in general, it is admitted that the Emperor and his followers, assailed by unearthly influences, which no man,

not even a Frenchman, can resist, fled from the enchanted land, and reappeared, what was left of them, in most melancholy plight, in the regions of matter-of-fact, and subsequently faded into the light of common day.

Such in its main features is the marvellous tale that is imparted as the story of Waterloo to the youth of France. Of late, it is true, some sceptics have appeared who, no less solicitous than their predecessors for French glory, yet venture to speak of Napoleon as a mere fallible mortal. But these are as yet a small minority. M. Thiers, as we mentioned in reviewing him last month, adheres to the ancient myth, and will hear of no abatement either of the glory of France or of the glory of Napoleon, for the preservation of which no sacrifices are too great, not even that of the rules of arithmetic. But, however faithful he may be to French traditions, there is assuredly nothing clever or amusing in the romance of Waterloo by M. Thiers. To the old stage properties of "fatality" and the inevitable If, he adds nothing except an audacious falsification of numbers, and a more lavish censure of the Emperor's lieutenants. M. Victor Hugo is a spirit of another sort. He is a man of eloquence and imagination. Not driven, like the clumsy and commonplace conjuror Thiers, to rely on such transparent

devices as telling his audience that two and two make five, he, like a man of resource, invents incidents, revels in fine similes and poetic language, and philosophises in a strain suited to the region of romantic fable. With him Napoleon is not merely the favourite of the gods, but almost their equal. He stands to the unseen powers something in the relation that Prometheus stood to Zeus—and like him he is punished rather as an audacious rival than as a presumptuous mortal. M. Hugo also invents a pitfall, not a metaphorical but a veritable pitfall, to account for the French disaster; he makes a new use of the great If;—and, last and most wonderful of all his discoveries, he tells us that the destiny of the world was changed by the nod of a Belgian peasant's head. The new features, then, presented by M. Hugo's solution of the great Gallic problem, are—this extraordinary nod, potent as that of Jupiter—the fatal trap or pitfall—and the singular relation in which Napoleon stands to the French Providence,—all of which are perfectly original; but the originality of the incidents is not greater than that of the language and descriptions.

And here it is necessary to warn the sensitive reader, that in speaking of the French Providence we mean nothing irreverent, any more

than if we were discussing Pluto or the Parcæ. It is a thoroughly Pagan deity, only without the picturesqueness of the gods of Greece. It is a modern French adaptation of an ancient model, and its principal use is, to interpose at critical moments for the benefit of art, to hang sentiments on, to be on terms of respectful intimacy with, to tag sentences, to point epigrams, and to give zest to obscenity.

In the year 1861, M. Hugo, it seems, was journeying from Nivelles to La Hulpe on foot, when he reached a picturesque old farm or chateau, which he describes very agreeably and minutely, noting even that a brave little bird was singing in a large tree, being, as he observes with true French gallantry, "probably amorous." As he is inspecting some damage done to the building, a peasant woman tells him that the injuries were caused by bullets, and that the place is called Hougomont. At the word he began to look about him. He presently perceived a hillock, surmounted by something that looked in the distance like a lion. He then perceived he was on the field of Waterloo. Such was our author's introduction to that Enchanted Ground where all natives of France become subject to strange delusions. M. Hugo was not exempt from the fate of his countrymen. That peasant woman was probably a

Belgian Circe ; and, after his brief parley with the witch, he began to dream about Waterloo, extravagantly, of course, but still with the extravagance of a man of genius and a poet.

“Hougomont,” he exclaims, “’twas a melancholy spot ; the commencement of the obstacle, the first resistance met with at Waterloo by the great woodcutter of Europe called Napoleon ; the first knot under the blow of his axe.” He describes the courtyard, “the conquest of which,” says he, “was a dream of Napoleon. Could he have taken that corner of ground, it would perhaps have given him the world.” And he, more generous than his countrymen, at once conciliates our goodwill by remarking that “the English behaved admirably there. The four companies of the Guards of Cooke maintained themselves there for seven hours against the fury of an army.” This shows that M. Hugo’s sense of justice, at least, is proof against the influence of the atmosphere, which usually causes the seer to look on the troops of perfidious Albion in a most contemptible light.

“The conflict for the entry of the courtyard was furious. For a long time there were visible on the beam of the gate *all sorts of marks of bloody hands.*” That is a real touch of a master of the descriptive ;—the following bit is perhaps better appreciated on the op-

posite side of the Channel than it will be here:—

“The storm of combat is still in this court; horror is visible there; the hurly-burly of the fight is there petrified; that lives, that dies; it was yesterday. The walls agonise, the stones fall, the gaps cry out; the holes are wounds; the trees, bending and trembling, seem trying to flee.”

A massacre took place in the chapel; where no mass has since been said. The head of an infant Jesus in wood was carried away by a shell. The chapel was partly burnt; the door and the flooring were destroyed by the flames, but a Christ, in wood, was not burnt. “The fire has consumed the feet, of which only blackened stumps are left, and there it stopped. The country people call this a miracle,” says our author—and adds, with a touch of Voltaire, “*The infant Jesus, decapitated, has not been so happy as the Christ.*”

The walls, he tells us, are covered with inscriptions; “there are French names with notes of exclamation—*signs of anger.*” And there is a well, “from which no one draws water any more. Why does no one draw water any more? Because it is full of skeletons.” . . . “They cast into it three hundred dead. Perhaps but too diligently. Were *all* dead? Tradition says

No. It seems that in the night which followed the burial, faint appealing voices were heard to issue from the well." Not groundless, this fancy, we lament to say, however horrible; for it is indubitable that the bodies laid in the common grave of the battle-field are not always lifeless.

He then proceeds to describe the garden and orchard. "It was in the garden," he says, "that six voltigeurs of the First Light Infantry, having got in, and not being able to get out, taken and hemmed in, like bears in their cave, accepted battle with two Hanoverian companies, one of which was armed with carbines. The Hanoverians, occupying the balustrades of the terrace, fired from above. The voltigeurs replying from below, six against two hundred, intrepid, and having for shelter nothing but gooseberry-bushes, took a quarter of an hour to die." After this the gooseberry-bush must take high rank among fortifications. It has certainly been too much neglected by military writers. He closes his spirited description with an account of the slaughter in the orchard. "Three thousand men," he moralises, "were in this single ruin of Hougomont, sabred, slashed, run through, shot, and burnt; and all, that to-day a peasant may say to a traveller, 'Monsieur, give me three francs; if you please, I will

explain to you the affair of Waterloo.'” This is epigrammatic, but it decidedly contradicts the former epigram, which said that “this corner of ground, if he could have taken it, would have perhaps given Napoleon the world.” The men who died to prevent that result can hardly be said to have died in vain, nor do the countrymen of those who defended Hougomont look upon their lives as thrown away.

Quitting this particular spot for a more general view of the battle, M. Hugo remarks: “If it had not rained in the night between the 17th and 18th of June 1815, the future of Europe would have been changed. Some drops of water more or less caused Napoleon to fall. In order that Waterloo might be the end of Austerlitz, Providence wanted nothing but a little rain, and a cloud crossing the sky quite out of season sufficed for the crumbling of a world.” We quote this sentence because it exhibits compendiously several favourite points of the French myth—the great If—the certainty that but for the rain Napoleon would have been victorious—the intimate acquaintance with the most recondite workings of that mysterious power, the French Providence—the inference that the rain-cloud coming so unseasonably is a special interposition, as if, in Belgium, rain in June were an unheard-of

phenomenon — and lastly, the inference also, that the rain wetted only the French side of the field. “The battle of Waterloo, and this gave Blucher time to arrive, could not begin till half-past eleven. Why? Because the ground was miry. It was necessary to wait while it got a little firm in order that the artillery might manœuvre.” Many Frenchmen really believe this. After mentioning, more truthfully and honourably than the charlatan historian, Thiers, that Napoleon had a great superiority of artillery, though M. Hugo diminishes it, we daresay inadvertently, by nine guns, he says, “Suppose the ground dry, the artillery able to move, the action would begin at six in the morning. The battle would be gained and finished at two o’clock, three hours before the sudden turn of fortune that the Prussians caused.”

Next he inquires whether the fault was in Napoleon. “He who formerly knew all the paths of triumph, and who from the height of his chair of lightnings showed them with imperial finger, was he now possessed with this fatal foolhardiness of driving over precipices his tumultuous team of legions?—did he reach at forty-six years of age a climax of folly?—this Titanic coachman of destiny, was he nothing more than a huge dare-devil? We by no

means think so." And the reason why he does not think so is, "that his plan of battle was a masterpiece. To go right at the centre of the Allied line, to make a gap in the enemy, to cut them in two, to push the British half on Hal and the Prussian half on Tongres, to make of Wellington and Blucher two fragments, to carry Mont St Jean, to seize Brussels, to cast the Germans into the Rhine and the English into the sea. All this was for Napoleon in this battle." Now, as this highly compendious and decisive plan was not executed, fortunately for the armies predestined to such an uncomfortable termination of their career, to what was the failure owing? If not to the fault of Napoleon, one might venture to ascribe it in some degree to the merit of Wellington, the course generally taken by public opinion with respect to victories, without good cause shown against such decision. But M. Hugo, after modestly disclaiming any pretensions to military science, though we believe he has quite as much as M. Thiers, and after admitting that he is "only a traveller in the plain, a seeker, bending over this ground paved with human flesh, perhaps taking appearances for realities," reveals to us his theory of the action of Waterloo. It was, he says, "a concatenation of chances dominating the two captains." This is the creed with

which we are already so familiar, and it means that things go quite naturally when the French win, but when they lose it is owing to some astounding fatality.

Having thus stated his general theory, M. Hugo goes on to describe the particular links in the "concatenation." And, first, he tells us that the battle-field was like a great A. "The left limb of the A is the road of Nivelles, the right that of Genappe, the cord of the A is the hollow road from Ohain to Braine l'Alleud. The summit of the A is Mont St Jean, there is Wellington; the lower left point is Hougomont, there is Reille with Jerome Bonaparte; the lower right point is La Belle Alliance, there is Napoleon. A little below the point where the cord of the A cuts the left limb is La Haie Sainte. In the middle of this cord is the precise point where the final word of the battle was uttered. It is there that a lion has been placed, an involuntary symbol of the supreme heroism"—of what, does the reader think? Possibly of some of the victorious troops, he will say. Not at all—"of the supreme heroism of the *Imperial Guard*."

"The triangle comprised between the top of the A, the two limbs, and the cord, is the plateau of Mont St Jean. The dispute for this plateau was all the battle."

Will M. Hugo pardon us for hinting that in this description, so compact, he has carried compactness to a fault? The attack of D'Er-lon's heavy columns against the English left—the death of Picton—the repulse and rout of the French right wing, with such heavy loss that it never renewed the attack—the charge of the heavy brigade, so disastrous to the French infantry and guns, and the severe loss our cavalry experienced in retiring after its gallant charge—are parts of the battle, and are *not* included in the limits of his triangle—not to mention the advance of the Prussians.

There is a time, says M. Hugo, “in every battle when all is confusion. A twilight obscurity reigns over the *mêlée*. Such a crisis occurred at Waterloo when things were looking grave for the English. Hougomont was damaged, La Haie was carried, Papelotte was taken. Some incidents apart, the attack had succeeded,” says M. Hugo. The incidents are the little misfortunes just mentioned that happened to the French right wing, and it was, of course, not worth while to break the thread of the narrative for the sake of recording matters so unimportant. The field, then, was, from noon till four o'clock, obscured, and the conflict unintelligible, and all that M. Hugo can descry there, is the vast fluctuation of a mixture of

uniforms, out of the various fashions and colours of which he makes a battle-piece worthy of Wouvermans. But all at once, in the afternoon, it cleared up. It was at the moment when Wellington withdrew his line behind the crest of the ridge, and Napoleon exclaimed, "The beginning of the retreat!"

The Emperor, we learn in the next chapter, "had never been in such good humour as on this day. Ever since the morning his impenetrability smiled. On the 18th June 1815, this profound soul, masked in marble, was blindly radiant. The man who had been grave at Austerlitz was gay at Waterloo. In the greatest among the predestined are seen these contradictions. Our joys are of the shade. The supreme smile is God's." That these last oracular sentences mean something very fine, we do not doubt; but what they mean we do not know in the least. Few plain Englishmen, we imagine, can read the very finest writing of an imaginative Frenchman without experiencing feelings very different from those which the writer expects to excite.

The Emperor's good spirits, it seemed, had dated from the night before, when "every moment had been marked for him with a delight." At half-past two he had supposed from a noise he heard that Wellington was retreat-

ing, and he promised himself the pleasure of making prisoners the 6000 English who had just arrived at Ostend. He spoke banteringly of Wellington. "This little Englishman wants a lesson," said he. M. Hugo assures us, though how he knows it is a mystery, that it thundered while the Emperor spoke. We suppose we are expected to infer that this was the voice of "Dieu" or "destiny" or the French Providence, replying to the boast in ominous tones. At half-past three, however, he was undeceived about the retreat, having learnt that the English awaited battle. "So much the better," cried Napoleon. "I like still better to overthrow them than to drive them back." In a lesser man we should take the liberty of calling this swagger.

We now approach one of those original solutions of the problem of Waterloo with which M. Hugo entertains us. The road from Ohain to Braine l'Alleud was, he says, a hollow way so narrow, that in 1637 a merchant of Brussels had been ground to death in it by a passing carriage. It was also so deep, that in 1783 a peasant had been crushed by a fall of the shelving bank. And being at the summit of the ridge, it was, says M. Hugo, "invisible, and therefore terrible." This hint, dark as it is, he leaves to germinate in the mind of the

reader while he tells us something more about Napoleon.

Not all the ill success he had met with in the battle, the various instances of which are enumerated at length, could, we are told, shake the confidence of the Emperor. But it seems "a mysterious frown became visible in the depths of heaven." This was an ocular manifestation, we presume, of the same power that had previously replied to Napoleon in thunder. And of course a power that can frown and thunder can do a great deal more when thoroughly roused. Henceforth, then, we perceive that the Allies are mere instruments, and that the real business will be done by the owner of the celestial eyebrow. And it is a singular fact that these signs of immortal wrath are not recorded by any French writer to have given warning at Jena or Austerlitz that other great monarchies were about to be overthrown: so that we learn incidentally, how much more important to Providence are the misfortunes of France, than those of Austria or Prussia.

"At the moment when Wellington drew back, Napoleon started. He saw the plateau of Mont St Jean suddenly disgarnished, and the front of the English army disappeared. It was rallying, but it withdrew. The Emperor

half raised himself in his stirrups. The lightning of victory passed into his eyes.

“Wellington driven on the forest of Soignies and destroyed, that would be the final abasement of England by France: that would be Cressy, Poitiers, Malplaquet, and Ramillies avenged. The man of Marengo would blot out Azincourt!” Delightful vision! one of those in which French seers love to forget the stern reality. These and the like, are the judicious sentiments that keep alive the spirit of revenge in the bosom of every right-minded Frenchman. All the army, from the field-marshal to the simple *factionnaire*, the sleek citizen of Paris and the gaunt exile of Cayenne, the seedy plotter of Leicester Square and the fat “Mosoo” who walked so pacifically about the great Exhibition, become volcanoes at the name of Waterloo, and cherish the most sanguinary hopes of vengeance for the dreadful crime committed by our grandfathers upon theirs, on that iniquitous occasion.

Wellington, then, had recoiled. Nothing remained but to follow him up and crush him. Napoleon was, says M. Hugo, one of those geniuses from whence issues the thunder. He looked about for his thunderbolt. He ordered the cuirassiers to carry the plateau of Mont St Jean. But first he bent down and spoke

in an undertone to the peasant Lacoste, who acted as his guide. Lacoste made a sign of the head, "probably perfidious," says the chronicler. This is mysterious, but is presently explained. Napoleon had scrutinised the opposite ridge before ordering the cuirassiers to advance, and though he could not see the hollow road of Ohain, he suspected it to be there. "He had therefore put," says M. Hugo, "probably on the chance of an obstacle, a question to the guide Lacoste. The guide had answered in the negative. One might almost say that from this movement of a peasant's head sprang the catastrophe of Napoleon."

The unsuspecting cuirassiers then advanced as gaily as if there were no hollow roads in the world, and debouched on the plateau like an earthquake. "On a sudden, tragical to relate, on our right, the head of the column of cuirassiers drew up with a frightful clamour. Arrived at the culminating point of the crest, all furious and at the height of their exterminating course against the squares and guns, they perceived between them and the English a trench, a grave. It was the hollow road of Ohain.

"The movement was terrific. There was the ravine, unlooked-for, gaping sheer down under the horses' feet, twelve feet deep between its double banks; the second rank pushed the

first, and the third pushed the second; the horses drew back, recoiled, fell, slipt up with their feet in the air, bruising and throwing the riders; unable to retire, the column was a projectile; the force acquired to crush the English crushed the French; the inexorable ravine could only be closed by being heaped—riders and horses rolled there pell-mell, crushing each other, making but one mass of flesh in the gulf; and, when this grave was full of living men, the rest passed, marching over them.

“This commenced the loss of the battle.”

We said before that the great problem was dealt with in the present instance by a man of invention and imagination, and we think the reader, struck with the splendid conception of the hollow road of Ohain, which is completely original, must admit that we were right. How different this from the paltry commonplace fictions of Thiers! There is nothing at all entertaining in being told that two and two make five. But it is extremely interesting to watch the covert movements of the power that had predestined the destruction of Napoleon. Without M. Hugo's aid we should have failed to trace its machinations. But at the touch of genius all becomes clear—the rain-cloud, the thunder, the frown in heaven, the perfidious nod of the guide, and the hollow road, pre-

pared since the year 1637 for the destruction of the cuirassiers, are all parts in the scheme of destiny for the Emperor's overthrow. Zadkiel himself never explained more satisfactorily the operations of the supernatural world.

From supernaturalism M. Hugo passes by an easy transition to metaphysical speculations.

"Was it possible," he asks, "that Napoleon should gain this battle? We answer No. And why? Because of Wellington? because of Blucher? No. Because of God?"

This, though full of piety, is perhaps not so intelligible as might be wished. He therefore hastens to explain.

"Bonaparte, conqueror at Waterloo, that did not come within the law of the nineteenth century. Another series of acts was in preparation in which Napoleon had no place. Events had long since declared their hostile disposition.

"It was time this vast man should fall.

"The excessive weight of this man in human destiny troubled the balance. This individual counted alone more than the universal group. These plethoras of all the vitality of humanity concentrated in a single head, the world mounting into the brain of one man,—this would, if it lasted, be fatal to civilisation. The moment was come for the supreme incorruptible equity to consider the matter. Probably the principles

and elements on which depend the regular movements in the moral as in the material world, complained. Smoking blood, gorged graveyards, the tears of mothers,—these are terrible pleaders.

“Napoleon had been denounced in the infinite, and his fall was settled.

“He troubled God.”

Here, then, we have the explanation of the phenomena of Waterloo. As a Homeric deity conceives a jealousy of a Titan or a demigod, so is the ruler of the French moral world disturbed by this tremendous earthly potentate. The matter was evidently getting serious. The Prussians thrown into the Rhine, the English impartially cast into the sea, the whole world at Napoleon's feet, Fate naturally asks, What next? The conqueror and his army must find employment—and, if not on earth, the inference is clear. Destiny, on seeing him, in opposition to her decrees, escape from Elba, at once goes into training during the Hundred Days, and bethinking herself that he must be encountered somewhere, and finding herself in first-rate condition, boldly enters the ring at Waterloo.

Knowing then how, under such circumstances, an earth-born champion must fare, the reader of M. Hugo finds the interest of the event lost

in the foregone conclusion. The odds are so great that it becomes a hollow thing. Not but that M. Hugo now and then hints that, if Napoleon had had any luck, he might still have got the best of it. Destiny receives several facers, and about four in the afternoon is decidedly groggy. At five, things look very queer for her, and her backers are beginning to hedge. But the judicious bottle-holder Blucher administers a suck of the lemon at the right moment, when she rallies, and, stepping briskly in, knocks the Emperor out of time.

There are, however, several episodes worthy of note, though the event be no longer doubtful. The manner in which the cuirassiers charged is very remarkable. "Belly to the ground, bridles loose, sabre in the teeth, pistols in hand, such was the attack." No wonder that, as we presently learn, "this extraordinary cavalry petrified Clinton, who had seen Talavera and Badajoz." We are sorry that M. Hugo has not told us some particulars about the conduct of the cavalry in the latter action; whether, for instance, they distinguished themselves in defence or attack, whether in guarding the ramparts or escalading the walls. However, the cuirassiers, besides petrifying Clinton, and causing Wellington, "three parts beaten," to say, in an undertone, "Sublime!"

also "destroyed seven squares out of thirteen, took or spiked sixty guns, and carried off from the English regiments six colours, which three cuirassiers and three chasseurs of the Guard took to the Emperor before the farm of Belle Alliance." What chance our troopers would have with these warriors may be gathered from the following fact: "A sergeant of the English Guards, the first boxer of England, reputed by his comrades invulnerable, was killed by a little French drummer." It was no doubt Shaw, the Life-Guardsman, who became the drummer's victim, destroyed probably with the drumsticks. We are also supplied with incontestable proof that the cuirassiers were attacked in the rear, because there was a battery in front of them, the balls from which struck some of them in the back, and they could not have turned their backs except for the purpose of meeting an enemy behind them. M. Hugo has seen a French cuirass in the museum, with a shot-hole in the left shoulder-blade. It was recorded, in the epitaph on Commodore Trunnion, that he never showed his poop to the enemy except when he took him in tow. We now learn that a French cuirassier never turns his back on the foe except when attacked in the rear.

As a tender relief to these scenes of blood,

the skilful narrator introduces a touching incident in most pathetic language. "The square on the extreme right, the most exposed of all, being without support, was nearly destroyed by the first shocks. It was formed of the 75th Regiment of Highlanders. The piper in the centre, whilst extermination was dealt around him, casting down, in profound abstraction, his melancholy eye, full of the reflection of the forests and the lakes, seated on a drum, his pibroch under his arm, played his mountain-music. These Scotchmen died in thinking of Ben Lothian, as the Greeks in remembering Argos. The sabre of a cuirassier, striking down the pibroch and the arm which carried it, stopped the music by killing the musician."

Was ever anything so full of pathos? The fact that these unfortunate Scotchmen thought of Ben Lothian, shows that their minds were giving way under the pressure of circumstances. What a subject that piper for Thomas Faed or Noel Paton! though they would probably have to call in the aid of some eminent landscape-painter to represent the eye "full of the reflection of the forests and lakes." The great difficulty would manifestly be the pibroch under the arm, which must have been there, since the prophet-eye of M. Hugo discerned it, but which no artist could adequately represent. If the

difficulty be ever solved, however, we may hope for the gratification of seeing the famous Requiem introduced into the portrait of Mozart, and the symphony in C under the arm of the sculptured Beethoven.

The facts that Destiny had already decided against Napoleon, and that he could not have gained the battle in any case, do not preclude a further use of the *If*. "*If* the little herd-boy, who served as guide to Bulow, the lieutenant of Blucher, had counselled him to debouch from the forest above Frischermont rather than below Plancenoit, the form of the nineteenth century would perhaps have been different. Napoleon would have gained the battle of Waterloo. By any road except that below Plancenoit the Prussians would have come on a ravine impassable to artillery, and Bulow would not have arrived." Now we not only agree in this, but we will go farther, and say that, if commanders generally allowed themselves to be led astray by little herd-boys whom they had taken as guides, all the battles that ever were fought would have been quite different from the reality. But as generals usually select for themselves the points to which they wish to be guided, we do not see why the hypothesis should have been introduced in the present more than in any other case. How-

ever, M. Hugo has conferred on these humble guides a prominence that they have hardly attained in war since the Paladins were led to destruction by the traitor Ganelon.

We regret that we cannot follow M. Hugo farther. He continues the subject in a chapter headed "Cambronne," but it is the most extraordinary farrago of nasty nonsense that ever was printed.

Such, then, is the way in which it pleases our neighbours to write the history of Waterloo. It amuses them, and it does not hurt us. The theme is, for them, like an indeterminate equation, or a charade written about nothing, and which consequently admits of an infinity of solutions. The objection to this method of treatment is, that it may be turned against the inventors. A German writer, for instance, might compose in this fashion an entirely new version of Marengo. He might begin by asserting that, if the peasant who conducted Napoleon over the St Bernard had only pushed him into a crevasse of the mountain, there would have been no battle at all, which would be indisputable; and not only no battle, but no Consulate, no Empire, no Austerlitz, no Waterloo, and the history of the century would have been quite different. He might then state that Destiny was getting alarmed at the progress

of the Austrians in Italy, and had therefore decreed the downfall of Melas who commanded them ; and might represent the hostile power as giving signs of displeasure, varied, of course, for the sake of avoiding too close imitation : thus, instead of rain and mud, there might be a hailstorm and a sharp frost ; instead of muttering thunder, we might have the whistling of an easterly wind ; and a derisive wink might be substituted for the frown that was seen in the depths of heaven. Next the features of the battle-field might be brought into play ; a great many of the Austrians were actually checked and destroyed by a rivulet, the Fontanone ; the singular phenomenon of a rivulet existing on a battle-field might be descanted on, and, to increase the ominous effect of the circumstance, it might be mentioned that an old woman had been drowned in it one dark night in the year 1637. Bonaparte might be slightly alluded to as a second-rate general, the real antagonist being Destiny ; and it might be shown how, by pushing him into the Po and Suchet into the Gulf of Genoa, nobody knows what might have happened ; but that certainly Lonato, Castiglione, and Arcola would have been avenged, and the man of Marengo would have blotted out Rivoli. Lastly, to complete the details of the picture, some thrilling inci-

dents might be introduced : Desaix might be killed in single combat by an Austrian fifer, and a Parisian musician might be represented as seated amidst the *mêlée* with something corresponding to a pibroch under his arm (say the Marseillaise), his melancholy eye full of the reflection of the Place de Grève and the ruins of the Bastille, and thinking in his dying moments of the Lac de Boulogne, or the Champ de Venus. Such a course is manifestly open to the opposite party ; but the execution of the idea would create a terrible commotion in France ; besides, impartial people might prefer the real facts ; and on many accounts we think it will be better to let the French enjoy the distinction of being the only nation that write their history in this way.

FALSE COIN IN POETRY.

IT is perhaps a respectable instinct which inclines us to accept as good all the work of him who has come to be recognised as a great writer. The illusion created by the grand novels of Scott (which we maintain to be the best ever written) brightened to the eyes of faithful readers the dreary pages of 'St Ronan's Well,' 'The Monastery,' 'Peveril,' and 'Kenilworth.' Towards the close of his life, Dickens used to announce with the completion of every new novel that he had never before commanded so vast an audience as in that particular work; and yet every fresh tale showed a wider departure from that astonishing vein of humour which had first made him adored of the British public, and a tendency more and more confirmed towards a style of treatment which, instead of being humorous, was merely fantastic, exagger-

ated, and grotesque. Tennyson's splendid combination of inspiration and art in the "Morte d'Arthur" has drawn up with it into the empyrean a whole string of idylls which would scarcely have arrived there without its support ; and, in another region of art, Turner's later extravagances, no less than his early achievements, are worshipped by crowds of devotees following their high priest, Ruskin.

At first sight this trustfulness seems generous. The great writer has given us of his best ; let us be thankful for this also. His wine is on the lees ; but let us affirm it to be the same wine the body and bouquet of which so charmed us. Kind as this may seem, it is often an injury to the author, whose best work is depreciated when his worst is equally praised, and with whom future readers may make acquaintance through his inferior performances, which they have been induced to accept as just examples of his power. Nor can the exercise of this kind of indulgence give any true satisfaction to him who trustfully accepts as worthy that which is not worthy, since only fancied pleasure can be derived from fancied admiration.

But apart from the author and his admirers, there is something else deserving of consideration in the matter—namely, the preservation of a just standard of excellence ; and if the main-

tenance of this may properly demand that writers who are both bad and pretentious should be prevented by deserved criticism from corrupting the public taste, even more stringent would seem to be this duty where bad examples pass under the sanction of high names. To do this only is the object of the present paper, and not to discriminate nicely the different degrees of merit displayed by an author, nor the many cases where a stanza or verse less happy than the rest is so far an injury to what else is excellent—as in Cowper's beautiful address "To Mary," where there is one stanza which we have always wished we could blot out—

"Such feebleness of limbs thou provest
That now at every step thou movest
Upheld by two, yet still thou lovest
My Mary."

The forced conventional use of "provest" here is quite out of character with the ease and grace of all the rest of the poem, and the image suggested in the remaining lines is dangerously near the limit which should divide the pathetic from the mawkish. And we have always thought, too, that the "Battle of the Baltic" would have been vastly the better for the omission of the last stanza, where "Riou," however "gallant" and "good," jars, in his obtrusive personality, on the vague picturesqueness which

is the charm of the piece—and the mermaid, as a minister of condolence and fame, is sadly out of place; so that in the reader's ear might be left undisturbed the echo of the preceding lines, with all their sweet and melancholy cadence—

“Let us think of them that sleep
Full many a fathom deep,
By thy wild and stormy steep,
Elsinore!”

And again, one of Wordsworth's best-known sonnets is disfigured by the unpleasing and altogether unnecessary ejaculation, “Dear God!” while the last line—

“And all that mighty heart is lying still”—

would imply that part only of a heart might be still or in motion. But in these cases the passages in question have not been specially praised; perhaps, indeed, many readers have silently protested against them. It is only with the instances where bad work passes for good, or where admiration is demanded for it anew, that we now concern ourselves. In doing so, we shall probably tread on many prejudices, and jar on the links of many old associations, thereby arousing indignation, if not protest; and we must lay our account chiefly on the chance of being here and there thought to be right by the few.

The disciples of Wordsworth will admit that his strength lay in interpreting and describing the aspects of nature, and in viewing human life with the eye of a sympathetic philosopher, and not in dramatically presenting strong situations or powerful emotions. Also, he was essentially a British, nay, more, a home poet, only possessed of his full strength when his foot touched his native sod. Yet, when he once chanced to take up an ancient classical theme, demanding for its treatment rare dramatic power—for it involved the representation of the feelings and demeanour of a wife whose husband was suddenly brought back to her from the grave—he obtained so much success as this, that the piece “Laodamia” has ever since been quoted with applause, and has found a place in most collections of modern verse, including a selection from the works of the poet himself, made by his latest and most discriminating critic, Matthew Arnold. But no chorus of praise should render us insensible to the fact that in this case Wordsworth has but shared the general fate of those who deal with matters uncongenial. The very first verse labours, and labours in vain—

“With sacrifice, before the rising morn”

(why “rising” morn? Morn itself signifies the

rising of the day, and the phrase might therefore be paraphrased, "the rising rising of the day")

"Performed, my slaughtered lord have I required;
And in thick darkness, amid shades forlorn,
Him of the infernal gods have I desired."

Was ever expression more wooden? How the joints of the verse creak! The reader, instead of being transported in an ethereal car, is jolted in a waggon. "Performed," "have I desired," "have I required": how laboured the lines; how prosaic "performed," "required," and "desired"; and how abominable "my slaughtered lord"! a phrase suggestive of the knacker's yard, rather than of the death of a hero devoting himself for his cause, and slain in fighting valiantly with Hector!

In the next verse the countenance of Laodamia, awaiting an answer to her prayer, is described as "like the sun emerging from a cloud," a simile which for some centuries had not proved to be beyond the reach of a great many poetasters. The third runs thus:—

"O terror! what hath she perceived? O joy!
What doth she look on—whom doth she behold?
Her hero slain upon the beach of Troy?
His vital presence—his corporeal mould?
It is—if sense deceive her not—'tis he!
And a god leads him—wingèd Mercury!"

This bald disjointed commonplace is intended to express the profoundest emotion: it is emotion made to order, with the usual result. "Vital presence," "corporeal mould," "if sense deceive her not, 'tis he!" what very queer phraseology for the situation! Mercury can find nothing more godlike to say than "Such grace hath crowned thy prayer," which is pure nonsense, for how can a prayer be "crowned"? And then comes the interview, beginning thus:—

"Forth sprang the impassioned queen her lord to clasp;
Again that consummation she essayed;
 But unsubstantial form eludes her grasp
 As often as that eager grasp was made.
 The phantom parts—but parts to reunite,
 And reassumes his place before her sight."

No line could be more emptily pretentious than the second; the third and fourth are very poor; and the whole stanza feebly endeavours to do what Cowper has so much better done in his translation of the passage where Ulysses describes how he saw the shade of his mother among the ghosts:—

"Thrice I sprang
 Toward her, by desire impetuous urged,
 And thrice she fitted from between my arms,
 Light as a passing shadow or a dream."

The interview proceeds, unbrightened by a spark of poetry either from the wife or the

spectre, who appears to have acquired in Erebus a taste for preaching, which he unsparingly exercises on his unfortunate spouse, possibly in retaliation for conjugal lectures on earth :—

“ Be taught, O faithful consort, to control
 Rebellious passion ; for the gods approve
 The depth and not the tumult of the soul—
 A fervent, not ungovernable, love.
 Thy transports moderate ; and meekly mourn
 When I depart, for brief is my sojourn.”

It appears a doubtful boon to be permitted to see an apparition who goes on in this way. She might have heard something quite as impressive from any mundane philosopher with a taste for exhortation. It was rather hard, too, to be reproached for not possessing “depth of soul,” an attribute not exactly among those which it is in our power to acquire, while “tumult” might be pardoned to a woman in presence of her husband’s ghost. Altogether, if the shade at all fairly represents what the man had been, Laodamia was well rid of him. He scolds her, for wishing to embrace him, quite in the vein of Mr Chadband, and without any of the effect to be expected from a supernatural monitor ; for no sooner does the tedious apparition vanish, than “ on the palace floor a lifeless corpse she lay.” Then comes the moral :—

“Thus, all in vain exhorted and reproved,
She perished ; and as for a wilful crime,
 By the just gods whom no weak pity moved,
Was doomed to wear out her appointed time,
Apart from happy Ghosts that gather flowers
Of blissful quiet 'mid unfading bowers.”

What it was that the “just gods” punished—what the poor woman did, or omitted to do, which could only be expiated by this sad doom—we cannot divine. It was no very terrible crime, however it might be an error in taste, to wish to keep her husband when he had come back to her ; and she could hardly be expected, without the phantom’s peculiar gifts, to answer him in his own style. The ideas of “blest reunion in the shades below,” “happy Ghosts that gather flowers,” are not the views of Homeric times about the other world, according to which the ghosts of even the greatest heroes were sad shadows perpetually bewailing the life they had lost ; and the effect of such notions here is to produce a feeble muddle of paganism and Christianity. The redundancy in the fourth line is quite in character with all the turgid, pretentious phraseology of the piece—of which Mr Arnold, in the essay prefatory to his volume of selections from Wordsworth, says : “It is style, and the elevation given by style, which chiefly makes the effectiveness of ‘Laodamia.’” To us, on the other hand, it appears altogether unfor-

tunate for the poet that such a piece, by being enshrined among the selections, should receive a prominence which brings it into comparison with such admirable reproductions of the antique as the "Cenone" and "Ulysses" of Tennyson, and, above all, his "Tithonus," where, by an extraordinary effort, the poet projects himself into, and portrays for us, a condition of human life eminently poetical, but which could not exist except in idea. The injury which Wordsworth sustains when such scholastic stuff as "Laodamia" is offered as representative of his genius, may be estimated by contrasting it with the finished excellence of, for example, this stanza of his, describing the Shepherd-Lord :—

" Love had he found in huts where poor men lie,
His daily teachers had been woods and rills,
The silence that is in the starry sky,
The sleep that is among the lonely hills."

Such was what the bard of Rydal did at his best ; but, absorbed in the sense which he justly entertained of his mission as a poet, having entire belief in himself, and no sense of humour, he yielded much too unreservedly to the impulse to turn every thought that occurred to him into verse. Once put into shape, the piece was religiously enshrined in one or other of the niches which it pleased him to assign to his

verses—"Poems founded on the Affections," "Poems on the Naming of Places," and so forth; which might just as well have been styled—"Poems written on Mondays," "Poems written on Foolscap Paper," &c. Where so little power of selection of subject was exercised, it was inevitable that, however high the quality of some of the results might be, a good deal must be found altogether worthless. It was in recognition of this fact that Mr Arnold, a true though not a bigoted Wordsworthian, and a poet of such repute as to give authority to his work, undertook to perform the friendly office of delivering the bard from the lumber which so needlessly, and perhaps fatally, obstructed his progress towards posterity. Probably no one could have done this better on the whole; yet, small as the volume of selections is, we could have wished it to have been still more carefully winnowed. For example, what could possibly be expected from such a title as this—"Anecdote for Fathers, showing how the Practice of Lying may be taught"? It is evidently about as hopeful to look for poetry in this as in the versification of the bard's weekly washing-bills. Accordingly, the simplicity we find here has far overstepped the line which should divide it from childishness and twaddle. Recounting the incidents of a walk he took with

his little boy—the most remarkable of which were that they saw lambs, and heard birds warble—he tells how he asked his offspring whether he would rather live in their present farm, or their former home of Kilve. The boy prefers Kilve, and being pressed “three times” to account for this choice, the important narrative goes on thus :—

“His head he raised—there was in sight,
It caught his eye, he saw it plain,
Upon the house-top, glittering bright,
A broad and gilded vane.

Then did the boy his tongue unlock,
And eased his mind with this reply :
‘At Kilve there was no weathercock :
And that’s the reason why.’

O dearest, dearest boy ! my heart
For better lore would seldom yearn,
Could I but teach the hundredth part
Of what from thee I learn.”

The reader, who secretly rejoices that the fond parent did not realise the formidable notion of carrying his teachings further, will perhaps wonder why Mr Arnold has retained this piece (unless, indeed, as a specimen of what he has rid the volume of) ; but as we never heard that the “anecdote” ever acquired any fame among “fathers,” or any other class of readers, it is only noticed here because offered afresh as

worthy of commendation. But another piece, "Ruth," is both retained by Mr Arnold, and is often quoted with approbation, although it begins thus—

" When Ruth was left half desolate,
Her Father took another Mate,"

as fathers not uncommonly do ; and also in spite of the fact that the best-known stanza in it, describing the young man who proves false to Ruth, is thus worded:—

" He was a lovely youth ! I guess
The panther in the wilderness
Was not so fair as he."

"I guess" is very vulgar, inappropriate—for there is no guessing in the case—and evidently lugged in for the sake of the rhyme, because the poet could not part with "the panther in the wilderness," which does not strike us as a very happy or natural simile in itself ; and when the stanza runs on—

" And, when he chose to sport and play,
No dolphin ever was so gay
Upon the tropic sea,"

we are not the more reconciled to it by the sudden change from panther to dolphin ; for the latter simile, besides muddling itself with the former, is equally forced, and the line, "No dolphin ever was so gay," a piece of Words-

worthian puerility. Yet this stanza is frequently quoted with approbation, though never, we suppose, without exciting in many readers a prejudice against its author. Next comes a description of American scenery, no better than was to be expected from one who had never seen it:—

“ He told of the magnolia spread
 High as a cloud, high overhead !
 The cypress and her spire,—
 Of flowers that with one scarlet gleam
 Cover a hundred leagues, and seem
 To set the hills on fire.”

Why should the magnolia be “high as a cloud”? and why should “high overhead,” with its note of admiration, be added? A hundred leagues of hills on fire would certainly be a novel but by no means pleasing feature in a landscape, and very unfitly described by the word “gleam,” which signifies something transient and fitful; while the following simile—

“ Of islands that together lie
 As quietly as spots of sky
 Among the evening clouds,”

is peculiarly inapt, for the blue spaces of water between the islands would more properly be compared to the “spots of sky,” and the evening clouds to the islands; but in any case, the presentation of the additional image is no gain

to the reader, who can realise the appearance of islands in a lake quite as well as that of clouds in a sky. The lover, somewhat oddly addressing Ruth as "my own adopted bride" (as an adopted child is somebody else's child, an adopted bride might seem to be somebody else's bride), persuades her in language which is neither prose nor poetry to marry him, while Ruth is said to have been delighted to think

" That on those lonesome floods
And green savannahs, she should share
His board with lawful joy, and bear
His name in the wild woods."

The next lines are too bad even for Ruth :—

" But, *as you have before been told*,
This Stripling, sportive, gay, and bold," &c.,

was not a very good young man, though

" In his worst pursuits, I ween,
That sometimes there did intervene
Pure hopes of high intent."

What are hopes of high intent? Whatever they are, however, they were not realised, for, falling into bad company,

" His genius and his moral frame
Were thus impaired, and he became
The slave of low desires :
A Man who without self-control
Would seek what the degraded soul
Unworthily admires ;"

and accordingly,

“ Full soon that better mind was gone ;
 No hope, no wish remained, *not one*,—
 They stirred him now no more ;
 New objects did new pleasures give,
 And once again he wished to live
 As lawless as before.”

The consequence of this was, that instead of taking Ruth with him to the green savannahs, he only conducted her to the port of embarkation :—

“ But when they thither came, the Youth
 Deserted his poor Bride, and Ruth
 Could never find him more.

God help thee, Ruth!—*Such pains she had,
 That she in half a year was mad,
 And in a prison housed.*”

So the doggerel goes on, describing Ruth in her half-witted state ; and the forty - three stanzas of it end thus :—

“ Farewell ! and when thy days are told,
 Ill-fated Ruth, in hallowed mould
 Thy corpse shall buried be :
For thee a funeral bell shall ring,
 And all the congregation sing
 A Christian psalm *for thee.*”

Certainly the poor woman had done nothing to cause her to be denied decent burial ; but what there is in this or any part of the dismal, com-

monplace story to make it seem worth preservation, when so much of the same sort was being suppressed, we should like to learn from the editor. In his narrative, as in his semi-dramatic attempts, Wordsworth mostly hobbles along with the jaunty air of a rheumatic old gentleman who is resolved to step with dignity in spite of the incurable sciatica and lumbago which afflict him; and few are the examples in these kinds of composition in which he has borne himself naturally, and which can be quoted with benefit to his fame. It is when this poet, high priest of nature and student of the inner life of man, sets forth his favourite doctrine of the influences of nature on the soul of man, that he becomes transfigured, that he rises with easy power into a region of poetry where his reign is as absolute as that of an eagle in certain regions of the sky. It is then that he displays a finished and grand versification, that he snatches a grace beyond the reach of art, that he imbues his work with distinctive colour, and marks it for his own. Examples of this, conveying perhaps the whole essence of that philosophy which was expanded elsewhere, are the pieces, "Three years she grew," the sonnet beginning "The world is too much with us," the stanza already quoted from the "Feast at Brougham Castle," and some of "Peel

Castle in a Storm" and "Revisiting the Banks of the Wye." It would perhaps be too much (remembering the "Prelude" and the "Excursion") to say that all his work which was in unison with the spirit of these was good; but it would hardly be too much to say that all which was not was bad.

It was pleasant to find that Mr Arnold's catholic soul could so thoroughly sympathise with another great but very different order of poet as to impel him also in this case to undertake to free the bard from the *impedimenta* of his own inferior work. Yet we must confess to some points of difference from him also in this volume of 'Selections from Byron.' To begin, it contains, and thus assigns special distinction to, a piece we could never away with, the "Ode to Napoleon Bonaparte"—written, as Byron tells us, upon a meal of biscuits and soda-water, and of such flavour as that succulent diet might be expected to develop. On hearing of the Emperor's abdication, and finding that he had not thereupon committed suicide, Byron was filled with noble rage. The ode is written throughout in what Bottom calls "Ercles' vein—a vein to tear a cat in, to make all split," and begins, "'Tis done!" like a speech in a Surrey melodrama. Napoleon's defeat in battle had had the effect, it seems, of rendering him "a

nameless thing," and he is accused of being "abject," and, still worse, "alive"; after which he is reproached as an "ill-minded man"! (not a vigorous form of abuse, any more than "throneless homicide")—of whom it is then said—

"By gazing on thyself grown blind,
Thou taught'st the rest to see"—

an instance of self-contemplation which, as a metaphor, may take rank with "none but himself can be his parallel," or that in which an inconsistent gentleman was described as "turning his back upon himself." Then he is compared to Milo—

"He who of old would rend the oak,
Dreamed not of the rebound;
Chained by the trunk he vainly broke—
Alone—how looked he round?"

A most uncomfortable position for circumspection, doubtless, but vilely expressed, and very little to the purpose. By-and-by comes a very impressive reflection:—

"Weighed in the balance, hero-dust
Is vile as vulgar clay;
Thy scales, Mortality, are just
To all that pass away."

What Mortality has to do with scales, and where he or she got them, no man can explain

—the conclusion is not so profound that it could not be arrived at without introducing this queer personification with its balance. Afterwards Napoleon is exhorted, not too grammatically, to commit suicide without further delay :—

“ Unless, like he of Babylon,
All sense is with thy sceptre gone,
Life will not long confine
That spirit poured so widely forth—
So long obeyed—so little worth ! ”

And is thus scolded—

“ But thou forsooth must be a king,
And don the purple vest—
As if that foolish robe could wring
Remembrance from thy breast.”

A robe may be wrung, but cannot wring anything—and if it could, we are not told why he should desire it to wring remembrance from his breast.

We find this piece also among the selections in Archbishop Trench's volume of 'Household Poetry,' and in the 'Thousand and One Gems' of Charles Mackay. Perhaps the reason why it thus keeps a place is, that it forestalls the verdict of the present day on Napoleon, and sees as we see it, the nature of the man and of his power, divested of the illusions of glory. But it is as poetry that it must be judged : tried by that standard, the "gem" is of muddiest

paste, and the whole performance a villanous travesty of Byron by himself. It is an uncomfortable thought that such a piece should be so much better known than some of his beautiful work—for instance, than the “Stanzas composed during a thunderstorm,”—melodious, spontaneous as the song of a bird, the very spray of suddenly excited emotion. With peculiar pleasure we recalled them lately while looking on the huge range of Pindus, beneath which the poet was journeying when the storm broke over the mountain.

Some years ago, Mr Browning, in a volume of poems, took occasion to reflect unfavourably upon that passage at the close of ‘Childe Harold’ which has come to be known as “Byron’s Address to the Ocean.” In reviewing Browning’s new pieces, the ‘Times’ remarked indignantly on this disparagement of what it called “those grand verses which have stirred the souls of millions of Englishmen.” Thereupon a correspondence ensued in that journal, wherein Mr Murray, the son of Byron’s publisher, joined in defending “those glorious stanzas addressed to the Ocean,” and various attempts were made by him and others, with very doubtful success, to clear them from certain obscurities. Reading again the stanzas in question on that occasion, we came to con-

clusions about them quite at variance with the opinions expressed by their eulogists. And here it is well to premise that the present writer is one of what is, we fear, the diminishing class, who still look on Byron as a splendid poet. His vigour, his picturesqueness, his affluence, his lucidity (a quality not too common now), all seem to us admirable. That he may, perhaps, before long, hang "quite out of fashion like a rusty mail," is not his fault; it is a lot which he will probably share with Scott and other great contemporaries. The Pantheon of any generation can only hold a certain number of divinities, and as new ones appear, old ones must make room. But the time of oblivion will come the sooner for letting bad examples of their genius pass for good.

The "Address" begins with the line—

"Roll on, thou deep and dark-blue ocean,—roll!"

"Swear me, Kate," says Hotspur, "a good mouth-filling oath;" and this is a good mouth-filling line, but nothing more. Why should the poet tell the ocean to roll on? Moore, when he says, "Flow on, thou shining river!" has a good reason for it—the river is to bear a message in the flowers which he casts on its surface. No such motive exists here, and the line, with those

that follow, shows how sound and manner are accepted as substitutes for thought :—

“Ten thousand fleets sweep over thee in vain.”

Why in vain? the fleets might be thought to voyage to some purpose.

“Man marks the earth with ruin—his control
Stops with the shore.”

Hurricanes, earthquakes, frost, lightning, mark the earth with ruin, but not man. He marks it with cultivation and construction, the reverse of ruin. If he cuts down a wood, it is to replace it with a farm or a city. In war he destroys—but, for the most part, only what he has himself made. And how can his control be said to stop with the shore, when it is on the deep that his skill and boldness in bending nature to his purposes are most conspicuous? It is there that he makes the winds serve him, and by their aid converts it into innumerable highways.

“Upon the watery plain
The wrecks are all thy deed, nor doth remain
A shadow of man’s ravage, save his own,”

—that is, the ocean’s deed; yet, in the very next stanza, he mentions Trafalgar, where the bay was covered, after the battle, with wrecks made by “man’s ravage.”

Next comes a very disputable string of assertions :—

“ His steps are not upon thy paths—thy fields
 Are not a spoil for him,—thou dost arise
 And shake him from thee ; the vile strength he wields
 For earth’s destruction thou dost all despise,
 Spurning him from thy bosom to the skies,
 And send’st him shivering in thy playful spray,
 And howling, to his gods, where haply lies
 His petty hope in some near port or bay,
 And dashest him again to earth :—there let him lay.”

Except in the very limited sense that footprints do not remain in water—a truism too obvious for mention, and yet the only sense in which any part of this famous passage can be said to be true—it is certainly somewhat audacious to say that man’s steps are not upon the paths of ocean—and as to its fields not being a spoil for him, the fisherman will hardly concur in that. What follows is inhuman ; the poet, in his desire to add to the indictment which he is always pressing against his fellow-creatures, not only stigmatises the endeavours of man to render his abode habitable as the wielding of “ vile strength,” but goes on to imply that to sail on the sea is a crime justly punishable by drowning, when he makes the frustration of the mariner’s hopes and prayers by shipwreck matter of exultation—a sentiment continued in the next verse, and extended from a contemplation of

the drowning of an individual to the sinking of whole armaments. Truly a promising vein in which to address a maritime audience! To mend the grammar of "there let him lay," all sorts of alterations were suggested in the correspondence we have mentioned, all equally ridiculous: "there let him pray"—"there let him stay"—putting a comma, and carrying it on to the next stanza, &c., &c., while some boldly defended it as rather fine than otherwise. But the next verse was the main puzzle for the eulogists:—

"Thy shores are empires, changed in all save thee—
 Assyria, Greece, Rome, Carthage, what are they?
 Thy waters washed them power while they were free
 And many a tyrant since; their shores obey
 The stranger, slave, or savage; their decay
 Has dried up realms to deserts:—not so thou;—
 Unchangeable save to thy wild waves' play—
 Time writes no wrinkle on thine azure brow—
 Such as creation's dawn beheld, thou rollest now."

The third and fourth lines, perceived to be nonsense, have been a sort of conundrum, which Byron himself, it appears, in revising the proof, vainly endeavoured to solve; the "thou" of the sixth line, to make any kind of sense should be "thee"—"decay has not dried *thee* up." Of the eighth line it may be said that the immeasurable surface of the ocean can scarcely be styled its brow; that, if it could, azure is not

a very suitable colour for a brow—substitute blue for azure and it becomes ridiculous. But these are venial offences compared with that of talking of Time “writing wrinkles,” and of speaking of the sea as unwrinkled—that which another poet has justly called “the wrinkled sea,” whose “azure brow” is seldom seen unfurrowed by waves or ripples. So complete is the badness of the metaphor, that it may take rank as one of the three worst metaphors we know of, each perpetrated by a great master. Another of these is Wordsworth’s, where he speaks of the poet as gathering

“the harvest of a quiet eye
That broods and sleeps on his own heart.”

To represent as a harvest what the eye observes, is a forced kind of phraseology, pretending to be figurative, but presenting no image to the mind; and when we are further called on to conceive the harvest to be the result of the brooding and sleeping of the eye on the poet’s heart, a degree of inconsequence is reached of which Sir Boyle Roche might have been proud. Not less remarkable for confusion is the passage in “The Princess,” where we are told of

“jewels five words long
That on the stretched forefinger of all Time
Sparkle for ever.”

No doubt Time, who has always possessed a forelock, may also have a forefinger; but *all* time—that is time not figurative but abstract—cannot; the word “all” annihilates the personification, and with it all claim to the digit. But, granting the forefinger, why are the jewels to be placed on it? True, the forefinger is used for pointing—but it cannot point at the rings upon itself. Moreover, the forefinger can hold but a very limited number of jewels; yet the novel office assigned to Time, is that of perpetually holding out the member, to the neglect of his established duties with his scythe, hour-glass, &c., in order to exhibit these favoured vocables. Lastly, to fill up the tale of slips in the passage, “sparkle for ever” is wrong in referring to a circumstance of time, and unnecessary, as an indication of duration, after the phrase “all Time.”

Byron’s curious flatteries of the Ocean finish with the startling assertion—

“even from out thy slime
The monsters of the deep are bred;”

which, supposing the breeding of monsters out of its slime were honourable to the sea, as is apparently implied, the biologists, even of Byron’s day, would not have allowed to be true.

If we inquire why all this empty declamation has obtained, and continues to obtain, so much

applause, more even than the grand opening of the same canto, the reason probably is because it (as well as the "Ode to Napoleon") is in Byron's manner;—he wears the scornful look, takes up the imposing attitude, speaks in the sonorous tone, which he has assumed before when uttering memorable things, and it is too readily inferred that these outward shows are accompanied by the customary inspiration.

We so often recognise the justice of Mr Arnold's criticisms, both in poetry and in other matters, that we have the less scruple in indicating the foregoing points of disagreement in the judgments expressed by his two volumes; moreover, we find another claim to forgiveness in the circumstance that, in speaking of Shelley, he says wickedly, "In Mr Palgrave's 'Treasury'" (the well-known volume of selections) "may be seen a gallery of his failures." If Mr Arnold should revise his Wordsworth and his Byron, we hope he will avoid in them the rejoinder which he has given Mr Palgrave the opportunity to utter.

To say the truth, Mr Palgrave challenges criticism in announcing, in the preface to his little volume, that he has attempted to include in it "all the best original lyrical pieces and songs in our language by writers not living—and none beside the best." But, not to mention omis-

sions, we should take exception to many of his pieces as much too slight for a collection so ambitious. The work of that amorous ecclesiastic, Herrick, though generally thin, was often graceful; and if he were to be admitted at all, he might have been better represented than by such stuff as this:—

“ Whenas in silks my Julia goes
 Then, then (methinks) how sweetly flows
 The liquefaction of her clothes.
 Next when I cast mine eyes and see
 That brave vibration each way free;
 O how that glittering taketh me !”

Deep must have been the potations in which the reverend bard had pledged his Julia, producing general “liquefaction” and much “vibration” in his brain, when he penned this nonsense; his face, the while, suffused with the beaming but foolish smile of complacent inebriety, as he foresaw, perhaps, the time, then far distant, when Mr Palgrave would pick this curious gem off the dust-heap and place it in his ‘Golden Treasury.’ Mr Locker in his ‘Lyra Elegantiarum’ has given much better examples of Herrick, besides other worthy pieces not in the ‘Treasury.’ Again, how can such exaggerated platitudes be accepted as Waller’s “On a Girdle” contains, beginning thus weakly in conception as in expression?—

“That which her slender waist confined
 Shall now my joyful temples bind :
 No monarch but would give his crown
 His arms might do what this has done.”

That Mr Palgrave finds a charm in bald and mawkish simplicity, there is evidence also in such pieces as “The Twa Corbies,” “Willie’s drowned in Yarrow,” and other members of that family of dismal old ballads, with only a few rags of meaning to cover their nakedness, which some people think they admire; “Bonny Lesley,” a very weak example of Burns; “Sally in our Alley”!! and many more. We meet again, too, that ancient impostor, the “Loss of the Royal George,” much worthier of Mrs Unwin than of her vigorous companion; there are specimens of Sam Rogers, as if that acid soul had ever been sweetened by poetic balm; and when the editor has such a field of selection as the works of Milton, he picks out the sonnet “When the Assault was intended to the City,”—the first line of which,

“Captain or colonel or knight-in-arms,”

can hardly be pronounced good; the second is very bad—

“Whose chance on these defenceless doors may seize,”

the third and fourth are still worse—

“If deed of honour did thee ever please,
 Guard them, and him within protect from harms.”

How awkward is "did thee ever please"!—how unnecessary after "guard them" the rest of the line!—how evidently is "harms" put in the plural for the rhyme, to the damage of the idiom! The next two lines are good—

"He can requite thee; for he knows the charms
That call fame on such gentle acts as these;"

but not so the two that follow—

"And he can spread thy name o'er lands and seas—
Whatever clime the sun's bright circle warms."

How could Milton do this when English was not read beyond our own islands? And why make the boast ungrammatical, as well as empty, by the second of the two lines?

"Lift not thy spear against the Muse's bower."

An axe or a crowbar might be effective against a bower, but not a spear. The "great Emathian conqueror"—meaning Alexander—is not only stilted, but obscure; for few would remember the name of the district in which he was born. The final line of the sonnet redeems it, and the emphasis given to the adjective "bare" by placing it last, conveys with singular effect the idea of desolation; but why place a flawed gem of Milton's in such a collection beside his more perfect work?

So far as reparation for neglect can be made

to the departed, it has been amply made to Keats. Though the fine passages he wrote bear small proportion to the pages which are never quoted, and hardly even read, and though his chief poems are but fragments, in his case promise receives the reward which is generally reserved for achievement. Of his completed works—probably of all his works—the favourite is the “Eve of St Agnes.” In it we find much graceful quaintness, many fine lines and stanzas, decorating a very slender fabric. The drift of Porphyro’s “stratagem,” as explained to old Angela, is far from clear—

“ Which was, to lead him, in close secrecy,
 Even to Madeline’s chamber, and there hide
 Him in a closet, of such privacy
 That he might see her beauty unespied,
 And win perhaps that night a peerless bride ;”

and not only not clear, but a great deal too much like the proceeding of the hero of a French novel. We have never understood how the closet in the maiden’s chamber happened to be a still-room crammed with preserves and house-keeper’s dainties ; still less why Porphyro should have occupied himself, during the maiden’s first sleep, in bringing them forth and heaping them “on golden dishes and in baskets bright,” apparently to no purpose whatever. But no passage of this poem—scarcely any, indeed, in

modern poetry—has been more warmly praised than the description of Madeline kneeling to pray before the painted window, “innumerable of stains and splendid dyes”—

“ Full on this casement shone the wintry moon,
 And threw warm gules on Madeline’s fair breast,
 As down she knelt for heaven’s grace and boon ;
 Rose-bloom fell on her hands together prest,
 And on her silver cross soft amethyst,
 And on her hair a glory, like a saint :
 She seemed a splendid angel, newly drest,
 Save wings for heaven.”

Now, considering that the poet had given himself an unlimited range of colours to choose from, he has shown an extraordinary incapacity to make use of the opportunity. On her breast is thrown gules—that is, sanguine hue ; on her hands rose-bloom ; while the silver of the cross is turned in colour to amethyst. These three, blood-colour, rose-colour, and amethyst, are all that the window, so richly and variously stained, can supply ; and whether the maiden’s charms were likely to be heightened by the substitution of these for the natural tints, and whether they would cause her to look like “a splendid angel,” we leave those who have an eye for colour and natural beauty to decide.

One of the most enthusiastic of the idolaters of Shakespeare asserts somewhere that not only may every speech in his plays be assigned to

its proper character, but even every line. The absurdity is evident when it is considered that to assert this is equivalent to saying that no two characters of Shakespeare could have conceived the same idea, or have expressed it in the same way. Far from sharing this opinion, we have often fancied that certain passages, even famous passages, had been noted down when they occurred to the poet, and had subsequently been assigned, thus ready-made, to some character during the writing of a play. The "Seven Ages" (not, for Shakespeare, of first-rate excellence, perhaps, as giving a compendium of human life) have no special fitness for the place given to them, except that they fill the interval while Orlando is gone to fetch Adam; there is little in the scene to lead up to them, and the philosopher who uttered the passage would have been impatiently, perhaps disrespectfully, listened to by the company. But nothing is more natural than that Shakespeare should a hundred times have thought "all the world's a stage, and all the men and women merely players;" that he should, at a leisure moment, have expanded the thought, and, pleased with the picturesque piece of work, should have taken the first opportunity of giving it permanence in a play. Another such instance is the Queen Mab speech, which the

gay, volatile Mercutio rather delivers as a lecture than flings off as one of those passing thoughts which form the fleeting populace of his airy brain. The irrelevancy of such passages is best seen on the stage, where the speaker takes up a position in which to address himself to the audience, while the rest of the characters stand idly and awkwardly by.

The most singular (and to us a most convincing) testimony to this practice—the natural, and, indeed, inevitable result of the operations of so exuberant and active a mind—is supplied in Hamlet's most famous soliloquy, by the lines where he speaks of

“The undiscovered country from whose bourne
No traveller returns”—

a grand passage, and eminently fitted to Hamlet's *character*; but not to his circumstances. That of all Shakespeare's personages it should be Hamlet who says this—a man, the current of whose life had just been changed by a revelation made in an interview with a traveller returned from the undiscovered country—is an oversight so singular that it can only be accounted for by supposing it to have at first been noted as a passing thought, and transplanted later into Hamlet's speech.

No passage in Shakespeare is better known, nor more often quoted, than Portia's appeal to

Shylock, beginning, "The quality of mercy is not strained." This line catches the ear rather than satisfies the sense,—“quality of mercy” conveys no idea beyond “mercy,” and “strained,” doubtless for “constrained,” is not a legitimate or happy equivalent.

“It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven
Upon the place beneath.”

If it does, it ought not; for nothing is more indiscriminate than the rain, which falls where it is not needed as well as where it is, on the sand of the desert as well as on the field, on the sea as well as on the land; whereas mercy would be, not a virtue, but the most mischievous of vices, were it indulged for any but the best of reasons,—the reason, namely, that in the particular case a better result might be expected from dispensing with, than from inflicting, the abstract award of the law. But we will grant that the simile is employed only to represent spontaneousness (though a good simile should need no such restriction) and proceed:—

“It is twice blessed,—
It blesseth him that gives and him that takes.”

But this is not peculiar to mercy—it is true of charity, magnanimity, generosity, justice, of all the social virtues:—

“’Tis mightiest in the mightiest.”

How so? How, indeed, can mercy be "mighty" at all? It is most conspicuous in the mightiest, because the powerful can exercise it on a scale and with a publicity commensurate with their authority; but it can in no case be said to be "mighty"; and the first "mightiest" is possibly a misprint (originating, like so many in Shakespeare, in the compositor's ear) for some such word as "brightest."

" It becomes

The throned monarch better than his crown :
 His sceptre shows the force of temporal power,
 The attribute to awe and majesty,
 Wherein doth sit the dread and fear of kings.
 But mercy is above the sceptred sway :
 It is enthroned in the hearts of kings,
 It is an attribute to God Himself,
 And earthly power doth then show likest God's,
 When mercy seasons justice."

This, addressed to a throned monarch, would have been highly effective; but being really addressed to a poor despised Jew, it is altogether out of place. Shylock might properly reply, "Why talk to me of what is becoming in kings? What have I to do with majesty and sceptred sway?" The appeal would be appropriate only if directed to the judgment-seat, not to him who stands there to "feed fat his ancient grudge"—a very reasonable grudge, let us, in justice to Shylock, say; for many a Christian would have desired to avenge the marks of contempt, gratuitous, outrageous, and

disgusting, showered by the merchant upon the Jew, even by the vivisection of the offender.

But now comes the most curious part of the speech—

“ Consider this,
That in the course of justice none of us
Should see salvation.”

Truly a singular mode of persuading a Jew, to talk to him of “salvation”! Such language would but have confirmed him in his fell intent; and when Portia goes on to say—

“ We do pray for mercy,
And that same prayer doth teach us all to render
The deeds of mercy ”—

the staunch Hebrew — who has already told Bassanio, “ I will not eat with you, drink with you, nor pray with you,”—irritated by having it imputed to him that he joins in the Christian’s prayer, must have been doubly impatient to commence operations on Antonio. Nevertheless, orthodox playgoers listen to all this with what they fancy to be intense admiration, though entirely irrelevant to the object, and faulty in itself. But we hold such believers in honour, and will say no more. Purposely have we kept this example to the last, so as not to fright them earlier in the paper; and, having said only thus much, we still feel as an ancient Greek might have felt who had been heard to speak ill of Apollo at Delphi.

THE SLAUGHTERS IN THE SOUDAN.¹

NOTHING short of the general outburst of indignation which has just startled him would have availed to call Mr Gladstone from the paradise in which he habitually dwells. It is said that he never reads a newspaper. Many of his colleagues, no doubt, draw inspiration from such sources, but he is not supposed to be in the habit of inviting, or listening to, suggestions from his colleagues, by whom, it is rumoured, he is more feared than liked. Thus, intelligence as to what the world is thinking about him or his policy reaches him with difficulty. The relations with those around him which he likes best, are those in which he stands on a pedestal and others grovel and adore. But belief in his own merits and his

¹ In 1884: slaughters of the Egyptian troops at Sinkat, and under Hicks Pasha and Baker Pasha.

own judgment was already the chief of his besetting sins, and this kind of intercourse, if such it can be called, has only served to exaggerate the failing into complete extravagance. He is his own Pope. What he, in the recesses of that autocratic and presumptuous spirit, conceives, must be right. If facts contradict him, he puts them calmly aside. Such is the mood in which he approaches public affairs. At the same time, as is often the case with imperious spirits, he is not a man of prompt resolution, because he is not a man of steady purposes. He is essentially shifty and evasive. When it is considered that the Minister who has had to deal with the different problems which Egypt affords is distinguished by these peculiarities, much of what has occurred there is already accounted for. The "policy" is all his own. No such wisdom as is born of counsel, and of consideration of the views of others, sways him, or ripens his statesmanship. "*L'état c'est moi.*"

But the problems which Egypt offered, when we became established there in military occupation, were such as needed a rare combination of wisdom and decision for their successful solution. To provide for the situation was a task which theorists would enter lightly on, though men of action would see in it occasion for all their resolution and all their resources. For

there might be said to exist no longer any institutions whatever in the country, civil or military, while, at the same time, what was called its Government was absolutely subject to our Premier's will. The sheet of paper was clean, and he had only to write on it. The plan devised in that shifty brain was eminently characteristic, and eminently that of a man who did not know men. He would rule Egypt, he would frame a constitution for it, he would imbue the corrupt pashas and the ignorant fellaheen alike with the love of representative institutions, and would then—that is to say, in a few months or so—leave them alone to regulate the clockwork wound up and set going by himself. But the choicest part of the choice plan was, that all the while this magical work was being done, we were to pretend that we had nothing to do with it. Egypt, England, and Europe were to admire the drama performed by the puppets, but all were to agree to ignore Mr Codlin hidden by the drapery. Then the deviser, the Demiurgos, casting merely an occasional glance at the admirable device, would be free to devote himself to more congenial pursuits—such, for instance, as exciting in this country uncertainty and dismay by formidable menaces to its institutions.

The programme conceived in this spirit would

have been quite impossible in itself, and some serious miscalculations were shortly manifest. Long after the period assigned for perfection was past, the most perverse failures continued to occur. Egyptian Ministers would not or could not play the game according to the rules. Free institutions appeared to flourish only as cut flowers would flourish when stuck in a bed. The native army, which, when organised, was to be the mainstay of those institutions, and which had been only induced to enlist on the assurance that it would not be called on for service in the Soudan, was suspected of disaffection, and appeared likely, therefore, to become merely a mutinous militia. But all this was not the worst. For it had been decreed in the mind of the deviser of this ingenious scheme for regulating Egyptian affairs, that the Soudan was to be altogether left out of it, and that immense province (since Egypt could not take care of it) was apparently to be left to take care of itself. This prudent plan was, however, all the less likely to meet with even a temporary success when Hicks Pasha advanced from Khartoum, for an incompetent army was then exposing itself to destruction in the attempt to put down a formidable revolt. Nothing but a swift and resolute change of plan, prompt interference in the Soudan business, and peremptory pro-

hibition of Hicks Pasha's advance, could have averted the catastrophe which was presently to call the attention of the world to the disastrous condition of Mr Gladstone's Egyptian puppet-show.

But poor Hicks Pasha advanced with his troops, whose bones are now whitening on the sands. Thereupon ensued a panic in terrible contrast with the previous comfortable complacency. The Mahdi's revolt, hitherto looked on, if looked on at all, as a dim insurrection in an obscure country, and too remote to excite apprehension, suddenly grew to the dimensions of the genie when the fisherman uncorked the bottle, and became portentous. His forces, to be transported apparently by some such supernatural means as other of the Arabian tales deal with, were forthwith to seize Khartoum, Berber, the First Cataract, even Cairo itself,—and Egypt was to be subjugated by a potentate who had hitherto caused us much less discomfort than Cetewayo. These were, of course, merely the delusions natural to a state of surprise and fright; but the Mahdi, actuated apparently by personal malignity towards Mr Gladstone, now committed, through his lieutenant in the Eastern Soudan, a series of acts of the most discomposing character; disasters happened to Egyptian troops, among whom

were Englishmen; garrisons were invested, almost within sight of our ships passing along the Red Sea, and Suakim itself was in danger. Then came a time of distracted counsels and hurried expedients,—not that Mr Gladstone would have been disturbed out of his complacency by such events alone; but the people of this country had begun to take an obtrusive interest in them, and that final cause, the safety of his party, had made itself felt. Gordon, then in Belgium, on his way to the Congo, was suddenly thought of, as if his name, hitherto unknown, had been revealed to the Ministry in a vision. It is only now that the policy intrusted to him is beginning to transpire. It is so simple that the most ingenious would have been the last to think of it. It consists in conferring on the Mahdi everything which he could possibly desire, or which the most complete successes could have obtained for him, including the privileges of the slave trade. “Only wait till we can get out of the way, and you shall not have the slightest trouble in the matter.” Such are the means by which the difficulty of the Soudan is to be got rid of. It will be an instructive lesson in the value of insurrection to a great many intelligent Mohammedans who are looking on in India and other parts of the world.

In the meanwhile something was to be done to relieve the beleaguered garrisons near the coast. In order still to keep up the admirable fiction of Egyptian responsibility, this was to be done with Egyptian troops. To the native constabulary was assigned this novel duty. War is not usually made with policemen, but the regular troops were ineligible, the British forces in Egypt were still under the prevailing conditions of dreamland, and there was really no alternative. The departure of these warriors from Cairo was not reassuring. English residents accustomed to see troops march off for active service with cheers and plaudits, must have felt surprised at seeing the relieving forces set in motion for the field by being surrounded with menacing cavalry, and carried off in chains. The result was even more startling than the destruction of Hicks Pasha's army; because, though the number of the slain was much less, the disaster was much more prominently in view. This, followed by another shocking butchery, had at least this good effect, that a new element now forced itself decisively into the Ministerial plans. The discontent of the nation became turbulent and menacing, the puppet-show was to be abandoned, and the real manager, after much ingenious evasion, was summoned before a very stormy audience.

And here, the despatch of English troops to the relief of Tokar—which, after all, were too late to save the garrison—suggests another peculiarity of Mr Gladstone's. It is one which probably appears to his Radical supporters a high merit, but which is a novel qualification for the Minister of a great Power,—namely, a strong dislike to the army. It only enters into his calculations as a political force, when he uses it with lamentable effects, as when, after Tel-el-Kebir, he allowed the share of a body of troops which took the principal part in the action to be suppressed, because credit taken from it and bestowed on Irish regiments would flatter the Irish people. He therefore takes no real interest in the army, the people of England take no real interest in it, and it is left in the hands of its immediate officials. The consequences are rather what might be expected than what might be wished. Political motives are paramount in the army. Mr Childers, the late Secretary for War, when his administration was seen to be tending to the question whether we had an army at all, left to his unfortunate successor the task of finding remedies for our military condition, and of describing it in all too flattering terms, and betook himself to a new post as Chancellor of the Exchequer, in which he was presently engaged, with his

chief and Lord Granville, in that ruinous negotiation with M. Lesseps, which was just stopped, by the interference of an indignant public, in time to prevent, not mischief, for that remains irretrievable, but the consummation of the sacrifice of British interests. If a firm of country attorneys had shown a similar indifference to the interests of their client, they would have deserved to be struck off the rolls. It is seldom that a single Minister succeeds in making two such *fiascos* in two different departments.

With such incidents occurring as were startling the world in the Soudan, with others equally grave, imminent, and with Mr Gladstone still making futile attempts at the evasion of responsibility, the vote of censure did not come a moment too soon. The part he played in the debate was characteristic. When he rose on the 12th to meet the charges of the Opposition, he displayed all his wonted dialectic skill. Much of his discourse—nearly two hours long—was misplaced, and not to the purpose; but it was arranged in the usual artistic style, and abounded with clever evasions, traps for cheers, taunts for assailants, and phrases meant to reassure the faltering among his followers. But the effect of his rhetoric was damaged throughout by facts which formed upon it a terrible commentary. Twenty-four hours before,

while he was exchanging telegrams with General Gordon, with the desire to cast on him the responsibility of helping or neglecting the despairing garrisons of Sinkat and Tokar, the question was already solved so far as Sinkat was concerned. Outside its walls there was enacted in the African desert a scene pitiable beyond imagination, and intimately connected with the business then before Parliament. We have been accustomed most unjustly to depreciate Egyptian troops, forgetting the conditions under which some constabulary, sent in chains to the field, had displayed a pusillanimous spirit. No braver or more devoted men ever held a post than Tewfik Bey and his unfortunate garrison. For months they had been beleaguered by hordes of pitiless foes. Many weeks had passed since the commander had announced—not complainingly, but as a fact necessary to be known—that his men, being only men, could not hold out beyond a certain day, for then their last morsel would be eaten. That day came and passed, and they were better than their word. They still held out. They ate the starving dogs in the streets. But these were sufficient only for a moment to stay the cravings of five hundred men and a thousand women and children, all in the extremity of famine. The dogs were eaten to the last bone. Then—was there ever

a more piteous tale?—they took to chewing leaves. And all the time, with eyes growing wider and more haggard as strength failed and hope diminished, they stared from the ramparts towards the sea, where, thirty miles off, they knew was a British admiral with British ships. They knew that Englishmen ruled in Cairo, that the Government they served was in the hands of the Government of England. Perhaps, too, these poor people may have heard that, in days past, England had been prompt to succour and swift to smite when those who depended on her were in deadly peril. And all this time the people of England, filled with indignant impatience, were yearning to help them. At length the last leaf was chewed; for the last time they stared upon the horizon towards Suakim; but neither on the earth, nor in the heaven above, was there any sign of pity. Then, finding nothing but their own bare manhood to rely on, they came to a resolve which deserves a lasting record in the annals of human fortitude. It might have been thought that spirit as well as flesh would have been starved out of them; but it was not so. They drew together for the last time within the walls, spent some of the last remnants of their strength in destroying their defences and their magazine, and then issued forth towards their

foes. Behind them came a forlorn and defenceless crowd of wailing women and crying children—defenceless because their defenders had only come forth to die. It is better not to attempt to imagine the scene which followed. Wolves might have felt pity for the forlorn troop, but their enemies were more ruthless than beasts, for they were fanatical men. Seldom has the sun in heaven looked down on a spectacle so lamentable as that which ensued, and the tidings of which arrived just as the debate began. Upon most of the minds of those present it exercised a powerful effect. During Mr Gladstone's speech, between his hearers and him, the dreadful spectacle outside the doomed and devastated city must have seemed to them to arise. His fine-spun rhetoric must have been confused for them by the fancied wail of women and children. They must have looked at him, and heard him, for those two hours, as if through a bloody mist. The hearts of most in that House were torn by grief and indignation. But there were some hearts (few let us hope) which met the saddening and humiliating tidings with equanimity. They were those of her Majesty's Ministers.

It would be absurd as well as unjust to suppose that Mr Gladstone and his Ministry are proof against the feelings of humanity. But

they are under a dominating influence which can, on occasion, quench these feelings. If, in the one scale, the followers of Gladstone place the claims of humanity, the sentiments of honour, the credit of their country, in the other they cast the interests of their leader and their party; and then humanity, honour, and national repute kick the beam. It is not fancy, but very present reality, that recalls to mind, while contemplating his attitude on this occasion, some grim idol such as we read of as being worshipped by barbarous tribes, whose altar reeks with the blood of hapless and innocent victims. Under an influence no more respectable than that which those benighted adorers submitted to, a great number of our countrymen literally no longer dare to call their souls their own. Men have been asking this long while, how far the delusions of the party could carry them; how long it would be, and to what length they would go, before they would abandon the worship of the gloomy and truculent image which they have set up? And perhaps there will this much good spring out of the horrible calamity in Egypt, that it will bring the spirit of party before us in its ugliest aspect and attended by its most pernicious consequences. When it is apparent that the voice of our common humanity, the natural impulses of Englishmen,

are held as nothing compared with the "consistency" of a single man, the predominance of a certain party, a spirit may be evoked, before which the most devoted Liberal will recoil. But the complacency of Mr Gladstone is as yet unshaken. The whole nation was moved to its depths by the catastrophe of Sinkat. It demanded of the Premier, through speakers in the House, "Where are these thy brothers?" and his answer was, "Am I my brothers' keeper?" Surely we may continue the parallel so far as to say that the slaughters of the Soudan have set on his brow a mark which nothing can efface.

MR FECHTER'S OHELLO.

HOWEVER critics who go to see Mr Fechter may object to his foreign accent and French manner, it is impossible for the most prejudiced Briton to deny that he possesses great qualities as an actor. His features are handsome, his bearing noble, his gestures appropriate and graceful, his attitudes picturesque, and his countenance extremely expressive. Besides these endowments, he brings to the delineation of a character an anxious wish to comprehend it, not merely as an individual creation, but as a harmonious part of an entire play, and his intelligence and sensibility enable him to catch the subtlest meanings of its creator. With so much native power to rely on in executing an original conception, and a good taste that warns him against claptrap

and mere traditional effect, he can, and does, almost altogether dispense with conventionalism. We are therefore certain to find his representation of a great character highly suggestive, and very original; we receive convincing proof throughout the performance that it has been studied in an earnest spirit; and his qualities as an actor enable him to give full and clear expression to his conception. Experienced playgoers, accustomed to look to points, miss many, but are reconciled to the loss by a succession of others quite new and equally effective. With less than the traditional amount of emphasis, they find enough of passion and energy to give force and vivid colour to the picture, and to satisfy their desire for strong effect. And a younger generation, who bring nothing to the judgment-seat but a capacity for receiving new impressions, are gratified with distinct and artistic impersonations of the introspective Hamlet and the fiery Moor, and they return to the works of Shakespeare with a sense of his depth, completeness, and dramatic power, which their unstimulated imaginations had perhaps been, on mere perusal, too inert to supply. He who can produce these results fulfils the actor's natural function of interpreter; his performance is seen, not only with pleasure, but profit, and de-

mands the respect due to the labour of a conscientious artist directed to a lofty purpose.

But, while giving Mr Fechter his due, it must not be forgotten that there is another whose interests claim even prior consideration. It is of great consequence to bestow on such an actor the encouragement and recognition which artists of all sorts, and players especially, find so essential to sustain their enthusiasm in their art, and their belief in themselves. But it is of greater consequence that the ideas of Shakespeare should preserve their full significance for each successive generation of his countrymen. And to measure rightly the value of Mr Fechter's impersonation of a Shakespearian part, it is necessary to ascertain what the precise conception was which the poet intended to embody.

Apart from the individual Othello, it is evident that the story and situations are eminently tragic and pathetic. Any man naturally estimable, who should, by the machinations of a villain, be urged to destroy the wife that he passionately loved, would be an object of interest and pity to the dullest audience. A newspaper report of a respectable mechanic who had been driven by such means to such a crime would contain deep tragic elements. A French novel, taking such a story as its basis, and an ordinary French

hero as its principal figure, might become, in skilful hands, intensely interesting. But a great dramatist does not trust to the story and situation alone for his effects; if he did, he would not be a great dramatist. Among all the varieties of human character, he selects that which will, in those particular circumstances, bring interest and compassion to their climax. Who, of all others, is the man who, while advancing towards such a crime, and even when stained by its commission, shall continue to retain the firmest hold on our respect and sympathy? That was the question for Shakespeare. Let the Moor be a weak-natured man, easily swayed by others, and, though we grant him our pity, we refuse our respect. Let him be a stern fanatic, setting a mistaken sense of duty before all human affections, and performing in his own belief a necessary act of justice, and, though we may grant our respect, we withhold our sympathy. Let him be violent and impulsive, the slave of passion, and, no matter how great his remorse, we neither respect nor pity him. Had either of these characters been the hero, the tragedy would still be a tragedy; but it would not be the perfect work of a great master. The degree of the effect depends upon the nature of Othello.

Shakespeare leaves us in no doubt as to that nature. Its main elements are solidity and depth. The Moor's is altogether a massive character, square and steady as a tower founded on a rock, and the foundation it rests on is self-reliance. Since his arms had seven years' pith he has lived a life of enterprise, adventure, and peril. The result of this training has been to produce a man prompt, resolute, and sagacious—pre-eminently a commanding spirit. The Senate, amidst all the grave, stern, experienced warriors of the Venetian Republic—such senators and such soldiers as Titian and Veronese have made familiar to us—look to him as all-in-all sufficient—

“ For their souls,
Another of his fathom have they none
To lead their business.”

He is rude in speech, for since boyhood he has lived in camps; but he is kind of heart—loves Cassio even while dismissing him, and seeks afterwards an excuse to restore him: even his arch-enemy and destroyer testifies that he is of a constant, loving, noble nature.

Up to the opening of the play this kind, just, valiant, self-reliant, commanding spirit has known but few of the sweets of life, for the flinty couch of war has been his bed of down. But now Fortune ceases her buffets

to load him with rewards: Desdemona, the peerless, is his; he is the trusted general of Venice, the honoured governor of Cyprus. It is at the moment when he touches the highest point of his greatness, and may look confidently forward to a serene decline, accompanied by all that Macbeth tells us should attend old age, "honour, love, obedience, troops of friends," that the devilish plot—a mere cobweb to a subtler or more worldly mind than the victim's—is cast across the path of this strong, brave, simple, unsuspecting nature, and hurls it headlong to destruction. And all the force and value of the character as a work of art, beyond the mere situation, is in the contrast between the strength and repose of Othello in the first two acts, and the wild frenzy of his passion when maddened by the poison of jealousy. It is the difference between Hercules resting from his labours, and Hercules tortured by the shirt of Nessus. It is because the ship is so noble that the wreck is so sad.

The object, then, of the artist who would accurately represent the idea of Shakespeare, must be to show us not merely a man in a frenzy of jealousy, but an Othello—one whom, as the Senate believed, passion could not shake, great, noble, self-centred, honoured—the sport of a devil. The first part of the problem is,

how to show Othello to be a man of that mould. Every look, tone, gesture, and piece of by-play is to tend to assure us that we see such a one before us. For, though self-reliant and commanding men may possibly be trivial in gesture, and insignificant in bearing, yet the actor who would so represent a great character is none the less in error for the fact. His business is, not to get us to admit that the man whom he represents may have been like his delineation, but to force us to feel that he must have been like it; and to do this the five acts of a play are but scanty space, and must be turned to the best account.

The bearing of Othello, then, must be eminently serene and majestic. He must have the dignity of one used to command; the deliberation of one accustomed to take counsel with himself; the resolute sedateness of one who has passed through a life of perils, and who can meet the violence of Brabantio, the weighty commission of the Senate, the brawls that frighten Cyprus from its propriety, all with the same steady composure. But, though noble in demeanour, he has no courtier-like smoothness; for, as he says, he is "rude of speech, and has not the soft parts of conversation that chamberers have." In speech and movement, then, he will be composed, weighty,

earnest, courteous, but by no means glib or graceful; his is the massive dignity of sincerity and self-respect, not the polished dignity of culture; and his affection for Desdemona, howsoever warm and tender, will have none of the graces of practised gallantry. He is a man to whom life and all its incidents are solemn and earnest, and whom no chance can confound.

Mr Fechter's acting so far agrees with this theory as to aim at a strong contrast between Othello in repose and Othello stung by frenzy. But how does he produce the effect? A great artist will generally relieve one species of excellence with another. Mr Fechter seeks to give his labour increased value in one point by ostentatious carelessness elsewhere. He makes Othello as uninteresting as possible in the first two acts, that he may subsequently startle the audience by his sudden vigour. Take away the splendid scenery and accessories, and who can, thus far, feel impressed or elevated? The scenes with Brabantio, with the Senate, with the offending Cassio, are all slurred over. He addresses the Senate like a disputatious Frenchman rather than a noble Moor; he kisses Desdemona's hand with the easy gallantry of a courtier of the *Œil-de-Bœuf*; he commands the dreadful bell that is frightening the isle to be silenced, with the tone and gesture of a testy

invalid angry with the footman for clattering the fire-irons; he runs through all the great speeches with which Shakespeare puts us in possession of Othello's qualities as if they were a necessary but tedious prelude to the real business; and throughout the first two acts we never catch a glimpse of the majesty and power of the all-sufficient general of Venice. That the subsequent scenes should fail of their full Shakespearian effect is therefore inevitable; nevertheless, they are finely and powerfully acted. Nothing can be more finished, distinct, and forcible than the changes from confidence to doubt, from doubt to conviction, from conviction to frenzy. In the scenes with Desdemona, where by turns he relents his fondness and relapses into fury, the play of his countenance gives full effect to the transitions of his mood. And there is one point which, if new, is an inspiration, when, in his agony of remorse over his victim, he calls out her name in a sudden accent of impatience and authority, as if she were feigning, and must hearken to the voice of command. Altogether it is a splendid picture of a fiery, jealous, tortured man; but that man is rather some hasty, passionate, excitable Indian or Persian noble, incensed against his favourite, than Shakespeare's Othello. The performance of Mr Fechter is a

most interesting study, and may justly add to his reputation. But multitudes will date their first distinct impressions of this great character of our great poet from this representation, and it is only right to warn them that they see, not a rendering, but an adaptation, of Shakespeare's idea, and that the true Othello is still greater than this.

Mr Fechter has a great number of Shakespearian characters to select from, to which I think him far better suited than to the Moor. His genius is of the graceful, supple, subtle, versatile, and pathetic, not of the grand and massive order. Besides Hamlet, he could play Macbeth, Richard III., Romeo, and Wolsey—widely different, yet all within his range. He would probably be the best Mercutio, or Benedick, or Bassanio, that the time can produce. But Coriolanus, Brutus, Faulconbridge, Othello are spirits of another sort; they are outside Mr Fechter's circle; and I confess I should see him with far more pleasure in a part where his own natural and apparent qualities should be more perfectly in unison with those which he aims to represent.

THE LIFE OF LORD LYTTON.¹

BIOGRAPHY in its present form is altogether a modern invention. Of yore the records of the most famous men were seldom longer than the magazine article of our day. Reynolds is said to have read through Johnson's life of Pope while standing with his arm resting on the mantelpiece; indeed all Johnson's Lives of the Poets together fall short in bulk of the life of Scott, of Dickens, or the present life of Bulwer. The life of Shakespeare, excluding comment and apocrypha, might be contained in a couple of octavo pages. Many famous personages have had no other memoir than notices prefixed to their works. It was Boswell who set the fashion, which his success confirmed, of placing before us not only the

¹ The Life, Letters, and Literary Remains of Edward Bulwer, Lord Lytton. By his Son. London: Kegan Paul, Trench, & Co.

great character, but the individual man, with his mode of utterance in speech and in letters, his prejudices, the incidents of his daily life, his peculiar ways, his bodily aspect, and his garments. A further stage was reached when a near relative or a professed eulogist undertook the office of biographer; sometimes with excellent results, as in Lockhart's *Life of Scott*, but only too often displaying chiefly the inordinate devotion of the chronicler. Finally, we have the deliberate autobiography—the author's recollections and revised journalising about himself—which, if in some respects a more authentic and intimate chronicle than could have been framed by any other person, may also, quite unconsciously to the writer, be more than commonly deceptive. The most notable example, perhaps, which exists of that rare production—a sincere self-portraiture by a genuine man—is the *Autobiography of Anthony Trollope*.

For all these forms of biography an appetite prevails so general and so insatiable, that a great many readers find entertainment in the lives of persons who were in no way specially remarkable. When *Smith's Life of Brown*, *Robinson's of Jones*, do not pass unappreciated, the *Life of Bulwer* cannot fail of an audience. His endowments were so remarkable as justly

to create a desire to know what manner of man their possessor was; and his character was so marked, individual, and interesting, as well to repay the inquiry. When he died, ten years ago, he had been for more than forty years a personage — a personage, too, the current of whose fame was fed by so many streams that it went on expanding to the end. As a novelist, popular from the first, he was one of the very few whose genius gained in strength and flavour with time. 'The Caxtons,' written in middle life, was an immense advance on 'Pelham'; and the tale of his completed works showed such variety of high-class excellence, that it was rightly said in an obituary notice of him in 'Blackwood,' that his death had deprived his country of her foremost man of letters. He was always writing, and never at any stage showed a sign of having written himself out. He succeeded to the audience, and in some degree partook of the characteristics, of two famous writers who could no longer satisfy the tastes they had created. At a time when Byron was still a pagan deity, worshipped by romantic youth, Bulwer arose to carry on the Byronic tradition. Don Juan, clad by a fashionable tailor, and with a seat in Parliament, frequently reappeared among us, and was always sure of a Donna Julia in the

boudoirs of Mayfair or of the Faubourg St Germain. Prose Laras and Corsairs and Giaours again stalked before us, intoning the sentiments which the young called passionate, the old high-flown. And at the same time, to no quarter did the admirers of Scott look with more interest than to the young author of 'Pelham' and 'Devereux.' His aim, like Scott's, was the representation of an epoch, whether the present or another, by painting its manners and setting its imaginary men in action. But the difference in their methods was too complete to admit of any comparison, and may be seen, in a compendious form, in the prefaces introductory to later editions of their novels. While Scott narrates in these the circumstances under which the incidents and characters of his story were impressed on his memory, or were bodied forth by his imagination, and how the tale itself subsequently took shape in his mind, Bulwer gives us an essay on the philosophy of art, states an abstract problem in life or conduct, and explains how the ensuing novel is its demonstration. Bulwer's method had its own special value, and it was infinitely better that he should work in his own way than imitate Scott, however successfully. But in these days, when the wand of the Northern Magician is losing its power with each successive genera-

tion, it is only just to record our conviction that, even in employing the resources of the art which he seems to ignore, he is supreme. We have never wavered in our belief, after all that has been said by devotees about Miss Austen and Charlotte Brontë, about Dickens, Thackeray, George Eliot, and Victor Hugo, that Scott at his best is the prince of novelists. Certainty of touch, richness of colour, interest of plot, vitality of character, humour, pathos, descriptive faculty, set forth in narrative the genial ease of which conveys a sense of mastery and power, combine to place him on a height unapproached by any other writer of romance.

Be that as it may, there was a large public ready for Bulwer, and he was a favourite with it from the first. For readers of primitive tastes there was great variety of romantic incident, situation, and adventure; while another large class was attracted by the evidence of thought and the mixture of philosophy which seemed to render novel-reading respectable by elevating story-telling to a higher stage. And while his novels were the mainstay of his popularity, there were other fields in which he was a personage of mark, and his successes in which widened and strengthened the foundations of his fame. Essays, in themselves evidences of a mind unusually thoughtful and discursive;

poetry, both original and in the form of translations from ancient and modern classics; plays which managers accepted and audiences applauded; speeches in Parliament and a place in the Cabinet—combined to keep him before the public as a man not merely of great but of singularly various ability.

When he was about fifty he began an autobiography which forms the substance of the first volume of the Life; but it was never completed, and does not even include the beginning of the literary and public career, the record of which must supply the chief interest of the biography. Apart from the skilled workmanship of the practised chronicler, the recollections of his childhood and youth are not likely to inspire, or to satisfy, curiosity; but they contain one incident of importance, for it left a permanent mark on his mind and his works, and illustrates what will be to many an unsuspected quality of his nature.

When he was between seventeen and eighteen, and while living as a pupil in the house of a clergyman at Ealing, he had a mysterious love-adventure. For a time not specified, but apparently lasting through the summer, he used to meet, under a dwarf tree overhanging a little stream in a meadow near Ealing, a young lady about his own age, whose time was left

very much at her own disposal. Whatever attractions she may have derived from the glow of his fancy, it is apparent that he saw in her something like a divinity. He repaired to their meetings with the feelings with which Rhœcus may have sought the oak where dwelt his Dryad. Her face always continued to be his ideal of beauty ; her affection, no less strong than his own, his ideal of feminine tenderness. She was for him glorified into a being sacred beyond humanity, to be approached with feelings as devout as they were ardent. But admiration even so deep as this is not unexampled in lovers of eighteen. The empire which Mary Chaworth established over Byron at an earlier age was powerful enough to be the inspiration at a later time of some of his most pathetic and popular poetry. But Byron's may be called a boy's fancy in comparison with the permanency of Bulwer's devotion. Like Rhœcus he soon lost his goddess for ever, and she was mourned for as only goddesses should be mourned—that is to say, as a man may lament throughout his life the loss of what had promised happiness too great for expectation, and which not even fancy could ever restore. It was, he says, “a brief tale of true passion and of great sorrow—a tale never to be told.” One day she failed to meet him, and never came

again. "Some months afterwards there came a letter. Not from her. She was married. She, whose heart, whose soul, whose every thought was mine to the last, she who never spared even a dream to another, lost, lost to me for ever!"

Three years later, when dying, she wrote to him expressing a wish that he should visit her grave. He made a pilgrimage to the north of England in obedience to this desire, passed a night of suffering on the spot, yet left it at dawn "as if rebaptised or reborn. I recovered the healthful tone of my mind; and the stage of experience and feeling through which my young life had passed contributed largely to render me whatever I have since become." This, however, was far from implying that here he dismissed his sorrowful remembrance of the past. The anguish of that night was recorded in a poem called "The Tale of a Dreamer." It was inevitable that this should recall Byron's "Dream." The two cases were so strikingly similar in their chief incidents, that had they been tales of fiction, one would have been condemned as a copy. Whole passages might be quoted from the earlier poem which would exactly apply to the later history. Remembering how strong was the influence of Byron on the clever young men of those days, it was certain that the later utterance, though

the outpouring of strong and genuine feeling, would be more or less an echo. Yet Bulwer had more than common power of versification, and his lines, though not calculated to catch the ear or charm the fancy like the melodious lament of Byron, are good poetry,—infinitely better than the doggerel—also inspired by admiration of Byron—which his clever contemporary found a place for in the pages of, we think, ‘Venetia.’ In Bulwer’s first published novel, ‘Falkland,’ the hero’s recollections of his youth contain the brief but exact record of the real incidents. In an essay in the ‘Student’ there is a kind of prose monody inspired by the same deep sorrow. The epic of “King Arthur,” written long afterwards, has three fine stanzas, which owe their inspiration to that early source. And in the last work he ever wrote, when quite an old man, the love episode was still a transcript of these ineffaceable impressions. His son tells us that he was greatly agitated in reading the manuscript aloud,—that when the chapter was finished describing Kenelm Chillingly’s sufferings at Lily’s grave, he was dejected to a degree that his listeners were unable at that time to account for. Besides all these testimonies of his unforgotten grief, many passages throughout his works assure us of its enduring influence in his heart.

It is not our function to reconcile the undoubted depth and permanency of this attachment with the susceptibility to the charms of the other sex which the biography shows to have been a main feature of his early life, and which is proved by the whole course of his novels to have characterised him to the end. He owned soon afterwards a very different kind of enchantment, under the spells of a very different kind of siren. Lady Caroline Lamb, best known by the connection of her name with Byron's, a very frisky matron of somewhat mature years, took a fancy to the clever young collegian, and flirted and corresponded with him for some months of the very year of Byron's death; but she soon abandoned him for "Mr Russell, a fashionable beau, extremely handsome, but dull, insipid, and silly." The effect of this intimacy may be traced (besides in several unpublished novels) in the Lady Roseville of 'Pelham' and the Lady Hasselton of 'Devereux'; and he may have repeated in other novels the favourite situation, probably derived from "Don Juan," of the introduction of the hero to fashionable life, and to the extreme of flirtation, by a mature but still charming lady, generally the friend of his mother.

Bulwer was entered at Cambridge, first at Trinity, then at Trinity Hall. The intellectual

youth is fortunate who meets early with gifted and congenial associates, for he probably gains from them the best part of his education. He learns to recognise various kinds of excellence, to measure himself with others, to know his relative powers, and finds in his intercourse with high minds both a chief pleasure and a chief stimulus. Bulwer's associates were Praed, "first in readiness and wit," but who never fulfilled the promise of his youth; Cockburn, who was probably indebted for much of his later success to his college reputation, and who displayed to the last qualities better suited to dazzle undergraduates than to impress his brethren of the bench; Charles Buller, Wilson, and Maurice; and Benjamin Hall Kennedy, "a young giant in learning." With these Bulwer took part in the debates of the Union Club.

"Men came from London to hear us. . . . The greatest display of eloquence I ever witnessed at the Club was made by a man some years our senior, and who twice came up during my residence to grace our debates—the now renowned Macaulay. The first of these speeches was on the French Revolution; and it still lingers in my recollection as the most heart-stirring effort of that true oratory which seizes hold of the passions, transports you from yourself, and identifies you with the very life of the orator, that it has ever been my lot to hear—saving, perhaps, one speech by


O'Connell, delivered to an immense crowd in the open air. Macaulay—in point of power, passion, and effect—never equalled that speech in his best day in the House of Commons. His second speech, upon the Liberty of the Press, if I remember rightly, was a failure.”

In these debates Bulwer was a conspicuous figure; he also succeeded in gaining a general reputation for ability, and in exercising that power of application which always distinguished him; and won the prize for English poetry, in a poem on Sculpture, dealing (we may venture to assume) rather with the picturesque than the technical aspect of that difficult art.

The autobiography ends with his twenty-second year, soon after he had left college. It is probable that, to all but his intimate acquaintances, he appeared at this time as a youth merely eccentric and dandified, and perhaps affected—characteristics which, joined to his sense of superiority, were likely rather to repel than to attract. But those who knew him better had already learned to expect that his ambition and capacity would conduct him to eminence. The only doubt was as to which of the many paths open to him he would select. He had it in him to become an essayist, a writer of fiction, a poet, a parliamentary orator, or a student. Nor was he without experience of a kind very uncommon at his age. He had

looked on the world with an observant eye, exercising his activity of mind and his constructive faculty in framing theories about the philosophy of life ; while the grief he had passed through had struck in his nature a chord which vibrated through his whole existence, and imparted to all his thoughts and works a tone of serious romance.

His choice of literature as the chief occupation of his life was determined by the unfortunate circumstances of his early manhood. A mutual interest sprang up between him and Rosina Wheeler, a young Irish lady of great beauty. His mother, for what will seem to most mothers just and excellent reasons, strongly opposed the match. His income, independent of what his mother gave him, was quite insufficient to marry on. Miss Wheeler had next to nothing ; and her mother, who lived separate from her husband, was “the *bel esprit* of a little group of socialists and free-thinkers, to the support of whose doctrines she devoted both her purse and her pen.” It was inevitable that Mrs Bulwer, ambitious for her son, and building his future happiness on a very different kind of alliance, should be actively hostile to this ; and Bulwer, the most affectionate of sons, believing that it was not a case where the affections on either side were



strongly engaged, promised his mother that he would not marry without her consent. Having given Miss Wheeler, to whom he was at that time under no engagement, to understand what his mother's view of the matter was, and that he was entirely dependent on her, he betook himself to a distance from temptation. But he was presently made aware that there was another side to the question, which he could not thus easily dispose of. Miss Wheeler, far from making a corresponding effort, let him know that she was quite prepared to brave his mother's opposition. It was under these circumstances that Bulwer, weighing his obligations to each, found himself so bound to Miss Wheeler, whose singular family circumstances had left her unusually friendless, that he could not keep his promise to his mother. He therefore returned to the young lady, and engaged himself; upon which there ensued a correspondence with his mother, full, on his part, of openness, reasonableness, and affectionate pleading. Up to this point Mrs Bulwer had done nothing inconsistent with the truest wish for the welfare of her favourite son. Had his choice fallen more happily, she would have been the most indulgent of parents; and that his fate should have impelled him in a direction so opposed to her views, was a terrible

misfortune for both. But it was simply a misfortune—one in which both parties were absolutely right from their own points of view, and fate only was to blame. A new situation, however, now presented itself with his marriage. The time of remonstrance was over, but not, unhappily, the time of maternal displeasure. His mother was for years unappeasable, though her son, whenever an opening was afforded, continued to address her in terms the most manly and affectionate—such as cannot fail to impress the reader with the sense that here was a character revealing itself, under heavy pressure, as of unusual strength and excellence, and such also, we will say, as should have restored him to her affection. But the mother's sense of injury prevailed. Representing his breach of faith to her as the cause of estrangement—though the real sting probably lay in the defeat of her hopes for a match such as should correspond with her high and just sense of her son's value—she not only broke off all intercourse with him, but accepted his resignation of the large allowance which he had hitherto received from her. The marriage took place in 1827, when he was twenty-four; and the imprudence of that step—always foreseen and admitted by him—at once made itself felt. The young pair might have lived on what they

had in a humble and economical way. But Bulwer's projects were different. Though all his life a man of careful habits, he thought nothing extravagant that could minister to the enjoyment of his wife, who had not herself the slightest idea of economy or management; and they started on a large scale of expenditure, thus entering on a course which led in more than one way to disastrous consequences.

Bulwer's sense of honour was so high, that the endeavour to continue to live beyond his means would have been to him an impossibility. But he believed, and proved, that he could by his own efforts raise his means to the level of his expenses. In the determination to do this, he accepted every kind of literary work that was offered to him. Magazines, reviews, newspapers, and the volumes known to that generation as annuals, received incessant contributions from his pen, very few of which have been rescued, or, probably, have been found worth rescuing, from the oblivion which naturally awaited them. It was not wholesome literary work—it was toil and drudgery. But at the same period he found time to finish 'Pelham,' which, pleasing the public, brought him offers for novels advantageous enough to justify him in devoting his pen henceforth chiefly to the compositions which exercised all

his best faculties, and have made him famous. But the incessant activity of his mind, and the labours to which it prompted him, proved too much for his never robust health. Even this result was not more lamentable than the effect on his domestic life. "So incessantly," wrote his wife to his mother, "is he occupied, that I seldom or never see him, till about two or three in the morning, for five minutes." It is evident that no amount of literary labour would account sufficiently for this neglect of his wife—and that, if the statement is not exaggerated, she had grave cause of complaint. Many circumstances are wanting to explain a situation which is in itself incredible. However this may be, things were evidently tending, even in these early days, towards the estrangement which finally became irremediable.

The novels which he produced within the period of his life comprehended in the present instalment of biography, were five in number—namely, 'Falkland,' 'Pelham,' 'Devereux,' 'The Disowned,' and 'Paul Clifford.' 'Falkland' was written before his marriage,—a gloomy story, or, rather, an essay upon a distressing situation created for characters which were mostly too unattractive to excite much interest in the reader, yet displaying earnestness and power. Perhaps the best testimony

to its merit is his mother's really clever criticism, conveyed in a letter, in which, after enthusiastic praise of what she deemed its excellences, she freely censured its faults, ending by saying, "Child, this is unworthy of you." It was his next book, 'Pelham,' which gained his public and fixed his vocation. A few years before, Disraeli had made a clever coxcomb his hero, and showed how amusing the sketch of sheer audacity, giving the adventurer, its possessor, an extraordinary influence in what was then called "high life," might be. Pelham also was a clever coxcomb; he, too, moved in the fashionable and political world, showing an adroitness far beyond his years, and exercising an influence far beyond his position. But Pelham was also represented as a man of honour, with sentiment and principle beneath his coxcombry; and his cleverness, instead of ending as Vivian Grey's ended, in the exposure of an unprincipled charlatan, led him to success, and his varied career, interesting all through, left the reader satisfied as well as pleased. The immaturity of the author is, it is true, frequently visible: the conduct of the hero during his canvass of a constituency, intended to display his dexterity, was more adapted to broad comedy than to a novel, and would in real life have appeared as vulgar impudence; in the

clever episode of the student Clutterbuck, that personage's simplicity and antique phraseology are overdrawn ; while in the entertaining scenes with the *gourmet*, Lord Guloseton, their creator would not, a few years later, have represented the gluttonous host as entertaining a single guest at a dinner, meant to be especially choice, with, besides a pair of fowls, *entrées* of *filets de poulet* and of veal—a combination quite incredible on the part of a professed epicure, and therefore false to the picture. But there was a vivacity and impetus in the book which would have carried the reader airily over greater defects than these. There was a melodramatic thread woven into the plot which perhaps pleased more than it offended ; and the character of Glanville, so strongly imbued with the odour of the footlights as to seem now quite incongruous in a tale of ordinary life, had for readers of those days this much in common with Pelham, that each was a different phase of the Byronic hero. And all the merits of the book were far more conspicuous then than now, when as a picture of manners it is somewhat obsolete, and gave assurance no less of versatility than of power.

This versatility displayed itself in the subject of his next work, 'Devereux,' intended to be a picture of the times of Queen Anne. Here the

melodramatic element came out very strongly indeed. The hero's brothers, and tutor, and wife, and father-in-law, are of the stagiest; and on such grounds it is dismissed in the biography with less respect than, as we think, it deserves. The hero is a very fair hero; and the early scenes at Devereux Court, with the clever and pleasant characters of Sir William the uncle, an embodiment of the spirit and the reminiscences of Charles the Second's Court, and the Lady Hasselton, the clever, light-souled, artificial fine lady of the De Coverley period, have always seemed to us among the most agreeable he ever painted.

'The Disowned' was constructed on a principle which could hardly produce a good novel—that of embodying abstract qualities, and setting them in motion, like chessmen, to work out some moral problem. "Vanity (Talbot); Ambition (Warner); Pride (Lord Borodaile); Selfishness and Sensuality (Crawfurd); Philanthropy (Mordaunt);" such is the author's own list of his *dramatis personæ*, as set forth in a preface—the design being, he says, "to personify certain dispositions influential upon conduct." Except John Bunyan (who did not write novels), nobody ever succeeded on such a plan, which, however, some whose genius was most opposed to it have been at times so

ill-advised as to follow : thus the ugly puppets, old Martin Chuzzlewit, and young Martin, and Anthony, and Jonas, were intended, their fabricator tells us, as different manifestations of selfishness, their rag-and-sawdust material becoming all the more apparent from association with such spontaneous personages as Mrs Gamp, Mr Mould, and the party at Todgers's, who drew their origin from a very different source. Theory of this kind was always more or less an element of Bulwer's plan, and indeed was an essential quality of his literary faculty ; and, in less degree, we find it inspiring his next novel, ' Paul Clifford.' The motive of this book was to expose some of the defects of the criminal law of the time. But this is evidently a much more practicable scheme than that of personifying abstract qualities ; and the book was popular, notwithstanding an unsightly excrescence in the shape of an attempt to caricature public men of the time (mixed with some abstractions as " the Whigs in general," " the Scotch ditto") under the guise of a gang of highwaymen. Of the popularity of the work there can be no doubt. Not only did it please novel-readers, but as letters from well-known literary men show, caused the author to be regarded as a growing power in literature ; while the biographer claims for it a share in the reform of

the criminal law. A few years afterwards, Dickens, consciously or unconsciously, worked on the same lines in 'Barnaby Rudge,' even to the extent of reproducing the main incident, in the final attitude of Mr Chester towards his convicted son the ostler; the tale, as usual, owing its vitality to the characters outside the theory, as the Varden family and the party at the Maypole—while the hero Barnaby is much less of a real personage than his own raven.

Thus far is Bulwer's literary career followed in the present volumes. His books had made him a popular novelist, and something more. While one large section of his public listened eagerly to the skilful *raconteur*, another found more serious satisfaction in the thoughtful writer whose romances were a treat for the intellect. It was certain that he would improve with practice, for his novels were the result of skill. His faculty was constructive, not creative. He had none of that power of imparting individuality to his personages by which Scott and Dickens have peopled the world of imagination with characters whom we quote and converse about as if they were our personal acquaintances. His faculty of humour was small—that he should have had more would have been inconsistent with the general cast of his mind and bent of his thoughts. Of wit he had

keener perception, and there is a great deal of it in his novels, especially in the condensed form of epigrammatic phrases and smart sayings; yet it seldom seems spontaneous, looking rather like the product of a theory framed from analysing the wit of others, and therefore fails as often as it succeeds. But he wove a good plot, and strengthened it with vivid situations to which the course of the story led up,—as where Brandon the judge condemns Clifford the highwayman to death, after having just learned that the convict is his son—where the guidance of Nydia, the blind girl, enables the lovers of Pompeii to escape amid the darkness from the doomed city—and where Zanoni takes his wife's place beneath the guillotine. This constructive faculty came out again conspicuously in his plays, which contained for the chief personages situations such as actors love; while the characters afforded outlines that, in the hands of such artists as Macready and Helen Faucit, grew into impersonations of so great vitality as has borne them down the stream of time to our own day. "Richelieu," "Money," and the "Lady of Lyons" have all been played very recently to full audiences. This thoughtful and careful attention to construction was properly accompanied by an equal solicitude for expression. His style was, or grew to be, in the main

excellent. At a time when a flood of washy literature—especially the writings of clever men who, capable of better things, have to work against time for the fleeting occasion—has corrupted the Queen's English, it is restorative to turn to the best composition of Bulwer. And while his range of subjects presents more variety than that of any other novelist, his work never failed to be distinguished by erudition as well as power. It was always evident that the care to make it as good as he could extended into every particular, and that is a compliment to readers which they always appreciate.

Mixed with these sterling qualities was an element which, respecting them so highly as we do, we may venture to notice; indeed it is too characteristic to be passed over in an estimate of his literary qualities—namely, a kind of staginess, the more curious because associated with the excellent common-sense which was more and more, as years wore on, a main feature of his work. In his pages, along with clever and practical men of the world, we meet with the personages of melodrama, arrayed as if by Nathan, and intended to impress the reader by dint of the fine sayings put in their mouths and the fine things said about them by the author. In unison with these are the

phrases descriptive of their doings. Drawing-rooms are "halls of pleasure,"—heroes of the piece have a "knightly bearing," or other exalted attributes—an elderly lawyer "bows his kingly crest,"—and perhaps the climax of this kind of phraseology was reached when Roland, the representative of Sterne's Uncle Toby, in the 'Caxtons,' denounces his son, who has attempted to carry off a young lady, as "baffled ravisher"! And in the same vein, which runs through all his works to the last, are passages of rhapsody,—as, for instance, in the excellent novel 'Night and Morning,' where stages of the narrative are marked by semi-poetical flights embodying some supposed analogy between the progress of events and the change from night to morning. But we are far from thinking that what were blots to a refined taste did not help him to gain popularity. The "gods," who exist in the reading no less than in the play-going public, enjoyed what was specially addressed to the shilling gallery, and by joining in the applause, helped, in theatrical parlance, to bring the house down. But it is a curious fact that, notwithstanding the undoubted favour of the public, he never gained even the toleration of the critics, who are generally at least quite as prone to follow as to lead popular opinion. Up to the close of

his life, and beyond it, he was the subject of habitually unfair and ungenerous comment.

The melodramatic tendency evident in his works, found expression also in his manner and attire, in this, as well as in his literary aspect, serving to intensify his individuality. His son describes him at twenty-two as "a good-looking, dandified, and eccentric but decidedly clever and ambitious young man." His harmless eccentricities of costume did not cease with youth; the present writer saw them in full efflorescence when he was past fifty. These adornments, which perhaps he had imagined as picturesque investments for some of his heroes, were of the florid kind, coming out in silks and velvets, remarkable trousers, brooches, pins, and even straps, making up an *ensemble* such as might have been gathered from the wardrobes of Charles Mathews and Edmund Kean. We remember an old lady, his guest, after surveying him with respectful admiration, in his sufficiently unconventional attire, turning to us with the eager question, "Have you seen him in his velvet hat?" a privilege which we shortly afterwards enjoyed. This taste for splendour he shared, as he shared other peculiarities of character, with a novelist and statesman, his friend and contemporary, who loved to invest himself, no less than his imaginary

characters, with spoils won in incursions into the tailor's art so daring, that, in one instance, even Bulwer owned to a misgiving. Writing to Disraeli about the manuscript of the novel of the 'Young Duke,' he suggests, "I would give matured attention to the Duke's dress. I confess I think the blond edgings too bold"—a criticism which, among others, seems to have preyed on Mr Disraeli's mind. We must leave it to students of the work to discover whether the blond edgings were sacrificed, or whether Mr Disraeli found himself unable to part with them. When the novelists first met, in their youth, the habiliments which each, being specially on his mettle, would have thought suited to convey a due impression of the magnificence of his fancy to the other, must have displayed extraordinary powers of invention. Also there were not wanting, to increase the singularity of Bulwer's presence, gloomy smiles, stately bows, and lofty gestures, suitable to a stage potentate. Yet with all this, his appearance was naturally distinguished and striking. He was an excellent man of business, and a reliable adviser, full of common-sense. He was also exceedingly good-natured : no man (as the present writer can testify from personal knowledge) could speak more generously, whether of rising aspirants or successful rivals. He never

retaliated on his contemporaries the aspersions lavished on himself. None was more ready to help others with friendly offices, or bestowed them with a better grace. He liked to do a service, and showed that he liked it. Ready to listen as well as to talk—entering with warm interest upon a vast variety of topics, and bringing to them unusual stores of knowledge—he was one of the most agreeable of companions, especially in a *tête-à-tête*. In larger companies, a deafness which came upon him with years deprived both him and his associates of much of that pleasure in social intercourse which he enjoyed himself, and largely conferred upon others.

His relations with Mr Disraeli, beginning with mutual courtesies as literary men in 1829, always continued to be cordial; and it is to be reckoned as a notable tribute to Bulwer's rising fame at that time, that the author of 'Vivian Grey' should have submitted the manuscript of his next novel for the opinion and advice of the author of 'Pelham.' There were many points of resemblance between these remarkable men. Both surveyed the problems of life with an inventive as well as a penetrating glance—both were fond of constructing theories about human nature and how to deal with it—both were confident in putting their theories into

practice. Their eccentricities no less than their serious work may have originated in a purpose ; even their exuberant dandyism may have been founded on the expectation of attracting by it some additional consideration or attention. Bulwer, as might have been expected from a man of his candour and good sense, never held either of the extreme views which at different times prevailed respecting the powers of Disraeli. When, in his earlier career, he was generally regarded as merely a charlatan, Bulwer recognised the uncommon gifts which conducted him to power and fame ; when he had already attained to these, Bulwer did not vary his estimate because of the rising tumult of applause which finally reached such an extraordinary pitch of enthusiasm. A very singular incident in their friendship is Bulwer's construction of what he called a "Geomantic Figure" of the character and career of "B. Disraeli," made in 1860. It is accompanied with an interpretation in the form of a prophecy, drawn from a process of divination. With some passages which persons not of the race of the prophets might have written, there are others, relating to his private as well as his public life, which dealt with the events of the future, and were fulfilled with extraordinary exactness, and much in opposition, as the diviner records, to what he should

himself have augured. In a notice like this we should hardly have paused on the incident but for its connection with some remarkable tastes and tendencies, without mention of which any sketch of Bulwer's character would be incomplete. Occult studies, comprising the magic of ancient times as well as the spiritualism of the present, had a great charm for him, and he entered on them with the earnestness which marked his pursuit of less mysterious knowledge. He dived into wizard-lore, equipped himself with magical implements, rods for transmitting influence, and crystal balls in which to discern coming scenes and persons, and communed with mediums and spiritualists. There can be little doubt that, whatever faith he might have in particular manifestations, he believed in certain occult powers of nature, to deal with which is the object of these mysterious arts. On more than one occasion we have known him to dilate on such themes with great copiousness of knowledge, and apparent trustfulness in the reality of their marvels. Once, as he stood before the fire in a large old room in which a *séance* had lately been held by the well-known spiritualist Home, and, his aspect rendered more weird by the theme and the twilight, described the ghostly things that had been apparent—hands and arms rising

through the table, touching those who sat round, revealing, when grasped, the startling fact that they ended at the elbow, and finally rising into the air, clad in a greyish drapery, and floating out of a particular corner of the room—he almost gave a listener the impression of being in the presence of a veritable necromancer. To this taste we are indebted for several well-known works—the novels of ‘Zanoni’ and ‘A Strange Story,’ and the remarkable tale, by common consent the most powerful ghost-story that ever was written, called ‘The Haunted and the Haunters.’ So illusive is the atmosphere of the tale, so vivid the description of its terrifying appearances, and so effective their connection with the agency of a malignant being possessed of supernatural powers, that on its appearance in ‘Blackwood,’ an anxious father adjured the Editor for God’s sake to tell him what truth was in it, as his daughter had known no rest or peace since reading it. Not the least interesting part of the biography will be a promised chapter on these mystical studies.

The volumes yet to come will be fuller of interest than the present instalment, for Bulwer went on ripening, and “hiving wisdom with each studious year.” In middle life he entered on a new phase of his career and a new aspect

of his reputation. In the 'Caxtons,' 'My Novel,' 'What will he Do with It?' and 'Kenelm Chillingly,' the public recognised a maturer wisdom, a wider experience of life, and a more disciplined style, than had hitherto been associated with his name. It was a theory of his that when an author had for a time receded from view, the best way of renewing his intercourse with the public was in the pages of a periodical. It was in 'Blackwood' that the first of these novels came out, which, quaintly founded on the relation existing between the chief characters of Tristram Shandy, was so full of playful wisdom and ripe observation, and so distinguished by graces and excellences of style beyond his previous work, that readers hesitated before assigning the authorship to their old favourite. Henceforth he commanded a wider and a choicer audience. John Blackwood was always proud and happy to think that it was through his mediation, either in the Magazine or in separate publications, that most of Bulwer's work in this later and nobler development of his genius was wont to appear. All through the rest of the novelist's life the connection between them continued to be marked to the last by cordial friendship, constant correspondence, and consultations and exchange of views on matters connected with

his writings, such as the experience and well-known judgment of the publisher rendered especially valuable. The great writer, among the most eminent of those who have adorned the pages of the famous Magazine, always repaid the warm admiration, tempered by honest judgment, of John Blackwood, with thorough confidence and affectionate regard.

It appears to us that the present Lord Lytton's part in the writing of his father's biography is well and judiciously done. Especial tact has been shown in dealing with the unhappy circumstances of Bulwer's married life, a matter which could not be avoided, and yet was so full of difficulty for the present biographer. His comments on his father's works and genius, while showing the most genuine filial devotion, never pass those limits in eulogy which may ensure every fair-minded reader's assent. We could have wished that what he had to say had not been so overlaid as it is with other matter. At least one of the two volumes before us is filled with an autobiography and with literary remains. A large part of the autobiography is taken up with an account of personages antecedent to his parents, the mention of whose names in the family pedigree would have sufficed, and whose lives and characters cannot be expected to excite any

general interest. Another large part is taken up with youthful adventures, met with in rural excursions, which certainly bear a very close resemblance, in all respects, to the incidents described in many of his novels as befalling their heroes, and will therefore inevitably excite the suspicion, in the case of one so habituated to this vein of composition, that they spring as much from imagination as from memory. And as to the policy of including the literary remains in the present work, there can hardly, we should think, be two opinions. Some of them consist of work abandoned before completion, others of matter which the author did not see fit to publish; and after perusing them, we must say that his judgment in abandoning the one and suppressing the other was right. What makes this arrangement of special importance is, that there remains a vast quantity of heterogeneous writings, consisting of several dramas, a volume of a history, sketches for historical works, and "an immense number of unfinished novels, plays, poems, and essays"—and all of these, we are told, "have been reserved as materials for the present work." Fully respecting the feeling which has impelled Lord Lytton to destine all this to form part of the forthcoming volumes, we would point out that it is a case where (especially

with part of the work before us) ordinary readers are better judges of the result than a biographer so near as he is to his subject in kin and affection ; and it is with the sincere desire to see the book made as attractive and as likely to be permanent as possible, that we would urge him still to take the opinion on this important point of some friend in whose judgment he can confide. This is not the case of an obscure or infertile author, whose unpublished writings may be the chief evidence of his title to be remembered. To our mind, such a lavish outpouring of crude or inferior matter as that which is contemplated, can only have the general effect of diluting the *premier cru* of a famous vintage with the washings of the wine-press.

THE LIFE AND LETTERS OF GEORGE ELIOT.¹

IT is not to be supposed that so remarkable a specimen of the human intellect as George Eliot's should have passed through its early stages without giving signs of what manner of spirit had come among us. While still making an idol of her doll, she was filled with that passion for books which invariably marks the childhood of those endowed with a powerful literary faculty. A child who loves meditation, or the observation of nature, or the practical work of life, better than books, may become a remarkable person—a philosopher, a discoverer, or an organiser; but the literary genius must in early life be fed upon books, and these not

¹ George Eliot's Life, as related in her Letters and Journals. Arranged and edited by her husband, J. W. Cross. In 3 vols. William Blackwood & Sons, Edinburgh and London. 1885.

few in number nor peculiar in scope, but embracing a wide range of subjects and of writers. In the young mind so predestined and so nourished, what is poor and bad passes off, what is good is retained; the more various the material, the richer the result—namely, that power of expressing the best ordered thought in the best ordered language which constitutes excellence of style. Whether a really omnivorous young reader, seizing on and assimilating all kinds of lore (and this wide ranging and wide pasturing is very uncommon even among children who are said to be fond of books), will become a fine writer, may be augured with a good deal of certainty by a little observation. If the effect be to puff him up, to cause him to put away childish things, to seek grave converse and the praise of his elders, he will probably develop into one of those fluent phenomenons, oracles of the general herd (always gregarious of opinion), who possess a fatal facility of expatiating in oily sermons, gushing essays, copious journals, trivial histories, or pretentious novels. But if he preserve his freshness of interest in all that charms the young, the chances are many in favour of his development into one of those artists of the pen whose works will live and nourish the writers of the future. Where opportunities are small, much will depend on the

character of the books at hand. Mary Ann Evans's home was not apparently very copiously supplied, but she was fortunate in those volumes which she could make her own. An old gentleman, nameless, but evidently worth crowds of ordinary old gentlemen in knowing the right thing and doing it, used to bring her sometimes a book as an offering, and among them the Fables of Æsop—so sure, with their four-footed and feathered representatives of the wise and the foolish, to expand the imagination of the imaginative child, the sympathies of the sympathetic. An old copy of the 'Pilgrim's Progress,' with illustrations less artistic but more in unison with the ideas of John Bunyan than would probably spring from a modern pencil, was always at hand to lead her into a supernatural world, with its mysterious scenery of the House Beautiful, the Delectable Mountains, and the dreadful valley, and with such tremendous inhabitants as Giant Despair and Apollyon lurking in its recesses. Another much studied theological work, also illustrated, was Defoe's 'History of the Devil.' A less formidable morality was represented by 'Rasselas,' tedious only to readers whose appetite has grown fastidious with years. In relief to these grave works stood the jest-book of Joe Miller, the somewhat practical and unrefined character

of whose mirth was corrected a little later by the gentler and chaster humour of Elia. It was not till the advanced age of eight that she became enamoured of the Waverley Novels; and then what a share must those great romances have had in forming the future Eliot! Is it possible that she could ever have become what she did if for these had been substituted, let us say, the monstrous indigestibilities of Mr George Macdonald, or Mr Wilkie Collins? So far, however, was she from growing proud as the possessor of all this lore, that she used to follow, like a small dog, the footsteps of a three-years older brother, who, after the manner of well-conditioned males of that time of life, permitted himself to be adored with much condescension and consideration. This fraternal alliance was, of course, the origin of the relations of Tom and Maggie Tulliver. It was interrupted by a pony, given to the boy, who found the quadruped a more interesting associate than the sister. The fact that Isaac Evans never became anything uncommon, remaining very much like his neighbours in pursuits and character, does not render in the least less natural the fact that he was worshipped by the little female genius. It is only commonplace little girls who are not prone to admire boys merely because they are boys, and with no more

real ground than that on which the British public sometimes grows fatuous in its worship of tinselled and trumpery idols.

The little girl had another object of reverence in a father who had probably so much, and no more, of Mr Tulliver as to pet her, to call her his cute little wench, and possibly to be very earnest in his denunciation of those diabolic agencies "raskills"; but who had much more (though still with great diversity) in common with both Adam Bede and Caleb Garth. Probably the former represents him when an artisan in his youth, the latter in his elder phase, for Mr Evans became a first-rate land agent, knowing thoroughly all the branches of that interesting business; as manly, indefatigable, conscientious, clever, and devoted to his calling as the two ideal characters. It is mere commonplace to a thinking person to be told that delineators of character seldom copy from originals after the fashion of portrait-painters. Every novelist must have been worried by simpletons who, incapable of conceiving such a thing as a creative faculty, press for information as to who it was that sat for this or that character, and are much exasperated that the imaginary secret, by promulgating which they hoped to gain great social distinction, should be withheld from them.

Few characters could be transferred bodily to a book with advantage to it. As Romeo, according to Juliet, might be cut out in little stars, so a strong individuality like that of Robert Evans may be made to give life and reality to a dozen men of fiction. His wife, pale, energetic, a good housewife and a warm-hearted mother, contained the germs, and more, of the celebrated Mrs Poyser. There was an elder daughter, Chrissey, who married early when Mary Ann was sixteen, and was thenceforward lost to view, though not to memory, for the recollection of the relation between the sisters suggested that between Celia and Dorothea Brooke, and the delineation of Celia was the result of a remembrance of Chrissey, though it could not be called a portrait.

The musing, observant, sensitive, deeply impressionable child lived with this family in Warwickshire, in a house bearing the curious name of Griff, of red brick covered with ivy, and having, like Mr Poyser's, a farmyard, barns, and large dairy. It stood, we are told, in a very flat uninteresting landscape of green fields and hedgerows. But there is something in the smallness of a child which prevents flatness from being uninteresting: to a creature who is too short to see over the smallest fence, and who is hidden by a gooseberry-bush, every

knoll is a mountain, every thicket a forest. Moreover, the unattractiveness of the landscape may have intensified the zest derived from the scenes of imagination in Bunyan and Scott; so that, on the whole, the flat fields may have been quite as useful in their way as if the happy valley of Rasselas had stretched from the door.

It need not be said how deep was the impression made on Mary Ann by the scenes and characters which surrounded her childhood, though at that period she saw these only at intervals, for at the age of five she went with her brother to a boarding-school till she was eight, when she was sent with Chrissey to a much larger establishment at Nuneaton, and remained there up to the age of thirteen. In all scholastic studies, then and afterwards, she showed capacity and power unequalled by any of her schoolmates. For accomplishments, she was an enthusiastic musician, and she took a singular pleasure in the study of modern languages. But the circumstance of this period which chiefly concerns the reader is, that at this second school the principal teacher, Miss Lewis, was an ardent evangelical Churchwoman, and became, and continued for years to be, her young pupil's most intimate friend. Always uncommonly susceptible of the in-

fluence of those around her, Mary Ann must have been especially so at this early age; and her ardent temper would lead her, particularly with the encouragement of example, to push any strong tendency to an extreme. Deeply influenced by the religious views of Miss Lewis, she came under other and still stronger tendencies from thirteen to sixteen, which period she spent at another school kept by the daughters of a Baptist minister in Coventry, where, we learn, she became a leader of prayer-meetings amongst the girls. When she was sixteen she lost her mother, and returned home to keep house for her father, the elder sister having married about that time; and now it happened that the practice of her religious principles, bordering on asceticism, placed her in antagonism with her brother. Isaac was fond of sports and pleasures, and had, moreover, imbibed strong High Church views. His sister not only opposed him with argument, but with a strictness of life which must have looked like a reproach. As she says of Maggie Tulliver, "she threw some exaggeration and wilfulness, some pride and impetuosity even, into her self-renunciation." To her "the pursuit of pleasure was a snare, dress was vanity, society was a danger." In her first visit to London with her brother, when she was eighteen, she would

not accompany him to the theatres, but spent all her evenings alone reading. To the evangelical religion she had (she avowed at a later time) sacrificed the cultivation of her intellect, and a proper regard to personal appearance. "I used," she said, "to go about like an owl, to the great disgust of my brother; and I would have denied him what I now see to have been quite lawful amusements." A curious confirmation of what she says of sacrificing the cultivation of her intellect, is found in reading her letters of this period to Miss Lewis. Nothing connected with George Eliot can be more curious, for one who remembers what her formed style was—how studiously truthful in rendering the subject-matter, how careful in the exclusion of conventionalities—than to mark how she adopted the very phraseology of her religious friends. Of the marriage of an acquaintance she writes :—

"I must believe that those are happiest who are not fermenting themselves by engaging in projects for earthly bliss, who are considering this life merely a pilgrimage, a scene calling for diligence and watchfulness, not for repose and amusement. I do not deny that there may be many who can partake with a high degree of zest of all the lawful enjoyments the world can offer, and yet live in near communion with their God—who can warmly love the creature, and yet be careful that the Creator maintains His supremacy in

their hearts; but I confess that in my short experience and narrow sphere of action I have never been able to attain to this. I find, as Dr Johnson said respecting his wine, total abstinence much easier than moderation. . . . I have highly enjoyed Hannah More's letters: the contemplation of so blessed a character as hers is very salutary. . . . Oh that we could live only for eternity! that we could realise its nearness! I know you do not love quotations, so I will not give you one; but if you do not distinctly remember it, do turn to the passage in Young's 'Infidel Reclaimed,' beginning, 'O vain, vain, vain all else eternity,' and do love the lines for my sake. . . .

"I have just begun the life of Wilberforce, and I am expecting a rich treat from it. There is a similarity, if I may compare myself with such a man, between his temptations, or rather *besetments*, and my own, that makes his experience very interesting to me. Oh that I might be made as useful in my lowly and obscure station as he was in the exalted one assigned to him! I feel myself to be a mere cumberer of the ground. May the Lord give me such an insight into what is truly good, that I may not rest contented with making Christianity a mere addendum to my pursuits, or with tacking it as a fringe to my garments! May I seek to be sanctified wholly! My nineteenth birthday will soon be here (the 22d)—an awakening signal. My mind has been much clogged lately by languor of body, to which I am prone to give way, and for the removal of which I shall feel thankful."

Music had not only been for her an enthusiastic study, but an extraordinary enjoyment; nevertheless she says:—

“It would not cost me any regrets if the only music heard in our land were that of strict worship; nor can I think a pleasure that involves the devotion of all the time and powers of an immortal being to the acquirement of an expertness in so useless (at least in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred) an accomplishment, can be quite pure or elevating in its tendency.”

Now her present biographer has judiciously refrained from signifying any approval or disapproval on this or the future phase of her theological opinions. It would be futile to argue a matter on which most readers must have made up their minds, and he evidently thinks that his business is to present the woman of genius in all the main circumstances of her life, and to leave the reader to draw his own conclusions. A cheap and easy effect might be gained by taking either side, but we shall follow the course of the biographer. Our only comment on the foregoing extracts will be of a literary kind. They prove that if she had held to her opinions, not only there could have been no ‘Adam Bede,’ ‘Mill on the Floss,’ or other novels; but she could never have achieved literary excellence of any kind, because her thoughts were working in a quite uncongenial medium, and the more she wrote in this style, the farther would she diverge from the path that afterwards led her to fame.

The opinion of the future novelist about fiction, at the age of twenty, was uncompromisingly severe.

“I venture to believe,” she writes, “that the same causes which exist in my own breast to render novels and romances pernicious, have their counterpart in that of every fellow-creature. . . . As to the discipline our minds receive from the perusal of fictions, I can conceive none that is beneficial but may be attained by that of history. It is the merit of fictions to come within the orbit of probability: if unnatural they would no longer please. If it be said the mind must have relaxation, ‘Truth is strange — stranger than fiction.’ When a person has exhausted the wonders of truth, there is no other resort than fiction: till then, I cannot imagine how the adventures of some phantom, conjured up by fancy, can be more entertaining than the transactions of real specimens of human nature from which we may safely draw inferences. I daresay Mr James’s ‘Huguenot’ would be recommended as giving an idea of the times of which he writes; but as well may one be recommended to look at landscapes for an idea of English scenery. The real secret of the relaxation talked of is one that would not generally be avowed; but an appetite that wants seasoning of a certain kind cannot be indicative of health. Religious novels are more hateful to me than merely worldly ones: they are a sort of centaur or mermaid, and, like other monsters that we do not know how to class, should be destroyed for the public good as soon as born. The weapons of the Christian warfare were never sharpened at the forge of romance. Domestic fictions, as they come more within the range of imitation, seem more dangerous.

For my part, I am ready to sit down and weep at the impossibility of my understanding or barely knowing a fraction of the sum of objects that present themselves for our contemplation in books and in life. Have I, then, any time to spend on things that never existed?"

She wrote a religious poem (not, in our judgment, a good one), in which, when bidding farewell to the things of earth, she implies an expectation that she will take the Bible (apostrophised as "blest volume!") to heaven with her—a sentiment objected to by the editor of the 'Christian Observer,' in which the stanzas appeared, because, he said, there would be no need of a Bible there. A more prosaic but still devout occupation was the construction of a chart of ecclesiastical history, which she only gave up on finding her plan forestalled. Nevertheless, while still apparently imbued with the faith she had held so firmly and almost aggressively from childhood, it is certain that she had already passed from the receptive to the critical stage of religion, and that her analytical faculty was already at work on the influences which had so controlled her conduct and daily life, for she was reading controversial works, and was much exercised about "the nature of the visible Church." The change of opinion which was impending, and perhaps in any case inevitable, was hastened by an im-

portant event which now took place in her life. Her brother married, and it had been agreed that he should occupy Griff, while his father and sister removed to a house near Coventry. Here she found next-door neighbours who, besides being cultivated people, were philosophical sceptics, and who did something more with their views than merely to entertain them. Mr Bray, an ardent phrenologist, had written on 'The Philosophy of Necessity,' and had married a sister of Mr Hennell, who had just published 'An Inquiry concerning the Origin of Christianity,' which had been translated into German, with a preface written by Strauss. Miss Evans was at first invited to their house as a person whose ability and fervent religious views might be useful in bringing back Mr Bray to the fold of the Church. Although, after her arrival at the new house, she wrote to her friend Miss Lewis in the former religious strain, yet her views of the subject must have been already shifting, for a complete change in them presently took place.

"It will be seen," says the biographer, "from subsequent letters, how greatly Miss Evans was interested in this book [Mr Hennell's]—how much she admired it; and the reading of it, combined with the association with her new friends—with the philosophical specula-

tions of Mr Bray, and with Mrs Bray's sympathy in her brother's critical and sceptical standpoint — no doubt hastened the change in her attitude towards the dogmas of the old religion."

She seems to have made the acquaintance of these neighbours just ten days before the date of a letter to Miss Lewis, in which she says:—

"My whole soul has been engrossed in the most interesting of all inquiries for the last few days, and to what result my thoughts may lead I know not—possibly to one that will startle you; but my only desire is to know the truth, my only fear to cling to error. I venture to say our love will not decompose under the influence of separation, unless you excommunicate me for differing from you in opinion."

A month later, the intended reclamer of the stray sheep, Mr Bray, "was so uneasy in an equivocal position that she determined to give up going to church." This nearly led to a rupture with her father, who talked of giving up his new house and going to live with his married daughter: it was not till after Mary Ann had planned to live apart, and had begun by going on a visit to her brother, that "the father was very glad to receive her again, and she resumed going to church as before." But so far was she from returning, otherwise than externally, to the church, that later we find her writing, "When the soul is just liberated from

the wretched giant's bed of dogmas on which it has been racked and stretched ever since it began to think, there is a feeling of exaltation and strong hope." Her new correspondent (for we find no more letters to Miss Lewis) was a lady of strong intellect and advanced opinions—Miss Sara Hennell, the sister of the author of the "Inquiry"; and henceforward she lived with the two sisters and Mr Bray in the closest intimacy and friendship, making excursions with them about the country, and imparting to them her inmost mind. In 1844, Mr Hennell married Miss Brabant, whose father was the friend of Strauss, Coleridge, and Grote, and who had been chosen to translate Strauss's 'Leben Jesu.' This task she persuaded Miss Evans to relieve her of, who, during the next two years, performed it most faithfully, for the translation was very highly esteemed by English disciples of Strauss, and reviewers did not fail to extol the excellence of the style. And that her change of opinion was not a half-hearted one, and was accompanied by no regrets, is evident from her mention of a certain subject as one she should like to work out—namely, "The superiority of the consolations of philosophy to those of so-called religion." Not the least notable of her minor changes of opinion is that respecting Mrs Hannah More,

the former contemplation of whose blessed character had been so very salutary. "I am glad you detest Mrs Hannah More's letters. I like neither her letters, nor her books, nor her character." Which of these diverse opinions of the good lady may be correct is a question that the present writer does not feel himself competent to decide.

When Miss Evans was thirty her father died. The Brays happened to be then starting on a Continental trip, and she being without a home, was glad to accompany them. At the end of the tour they left her at Geneva, where she determined to spend some months. It happened to her almost miraculously often that her chance associates proved to be remarkable people, entering into and making part of her life; and it was her hap to become a lodger in the house of Monsieur and Madame d'Albert Durade, who, perfect strangers to her when she sought their abode, turned out to be friends after her own heart, and so always continued. Her life in Geneva, planned to suit herself, while giving ample freedom and leisure, was brightened by these agreeable friends and their visitors; the scenery was full of charm and interest; and her letters express the delight in which this episode of her existence was passed, and the real grief she felt when it came

to an end in March 1850. But we should not have paused on it, even for this brief space, except to note that this resting-place, full of refreshment and repose, afforded the opportunity of facing what lay before her, and of considering how she should make herself a new home, and how shape her new life. Accordingly, on her return to England she very soon entered on an arduous occupation. It was for Mr Chapman that she had translated Strauss, and another German freethinker's book, and he proposed to her that she should become assistant editor of the 'Westminster Review,' living in his house in the Strand as a boarder. This position, which she at once accepted, brought her directly into contact with many eminent personages. Emerson and Froude she had already met at the Brays': Mill, Carlyle, Miss Martineau, Browning, Mazzini, Dickens, she became acquainted with through the Review or its editor, together with many who were pushing to the front as "advanced thinkers,"—and with most of these she had numerous points of sympathy. But it must be noted here, out of regard for the prepossessions of the many who fail to give to those known as strong-minded women the admiration which their virile qualities might seem to merit, that George Eliot was never in that sense a strong-

mind woman,—that while possessed of immense intellectual force, capable of grappling with the highest problems and most arduous tasks, she was of a moral nature tender, sympathetic, impulsive, and womanly, possibly in some things even womanish, and liable to be convicted by the truly strong-minded of her sex of what they might think a thousand weaknesses.

Among those whose lasting friendship with her began at this time was Mr Herbert Spencer, and he it was that introduced her to the man who was henceforward to be the predominating influence of her life. George Henry Lewes, a year or two older than she, though by no means so well known to the world as he afterwards became, held already a good position in letters. He was editor of a weekly paper—the ‘Leader’; he was known as a man of science by his ‘History of Philosophy’; as a novelist by ‘Ranthorpe’ and ‘Rose, Blanche, and Violet’; and he had contributed many essays to periodical literature. Uncommonly well read, even for an habitual student, he was a most agreeable companion, genial, easy, friendly in approach, ready to engage in give and take, on any subject, and sure to bear a clever, entertaining part in it. It is evident that from the first he and Miss Evans attracted

each other, and we soon find her letters beginning to contain frequent notices of "Lewes," and Lewes's state of health. Probably a womanly compassion at first counted for something in the intimacy, for his domestic circumstances were unhappy, his married home having been spoiled and broken up two years before. On his side the admiration amounted to a kind of worship—he became, and ever continued to be, one of a sect of disciples who made belief in her wisdom and goodness a kind of religion. As the intimacy progressed, her reciprocation of his complete attachment grew so strong as to impel her to cast in her lot with his. A word of farewell to her three friends at Coventry, when setting off with him for a tour on the Continent, told of the beginning of her union with Lewes.

Thus, for the second time, she had taken a step in life which she knew must place her in an attitude of estrangement from, or antagonism with, many of her own circle of friends, and with whole sections of society at large. And for the second time, as it proved, this step was of the first importance in the development of her genius. Whatever the world may think it has gained in her writings, it would not have gained if she had not, first, changed her opinions, and, next, formed this union with Lewes.

She might have searched all society through without finding a companion so fertilising to her intellect. She was eminently one whose self-confidence required to be aroused and constantly reassured; sympathy, praise, and encouragement were indispensable to her in pursuing tasks more ambitious, and demanding the exercise of far higher qualities, than the writing of a review. It is quite possible that this great novelist might have gone on all her life writing articles and reviews, unknown except to a coterie, had she not been roused to higher action by the counsel and example of Lewes. In this first trip to the Continent, while she was still engaged on contributions to the 'Westminster,' he was rewriting and completing, partly in Weimar itself, the stronghold of his hero, 'The Life of Goethe,' a work which at once brought him a wide extension of repute. A little later he urged her to try her hand at an original work—and now, and now only, can she be said to have entered on the approaches to her remarkable career. An inscription on the manuscript of her first novel, giving it to Lewes, says it "would never have been written but for the happiness which his love has conferred on my life." Henceforward the pair form a remarkable picture, working industriously in their home, each finding in the other not

merely an acute critic, but one bending all the energies of the mind to the consideration of what the other laid before it—all failure to appreciate made impossible by affection, but all undue or careless approval made equally impossible by a judgment too clear, and a taste too exacting, to let anything pass which seemed short of excellence. It is hardly a mere guess that a passage written a few years later in ‘Adam Bede’ describes the result of that union as it appeared to her then, and as it promised (and promised truly) for the future :—

“What greater thing is there for two human souls than to feel that they are joined for life—to strengthen each other in all labour, to rest on each other in all sorrow, to minister to each other in all pain—to be one with each other in silent, unspeakable memories at the moment of the last parting?”

It was in September 1856, she being then thirty-seven, and having never attempted a tale of any sort, that, after much urging by Lewes, she made her first essay in fiction. She had always been haunted by a vague dream that some day she might write a novel, but as time wore on without the effort being made, she lost hope of this. She fancied she might succeed in description, but would fail in construction and dialogue. Lewes, too, did not feel sure that her work would show dramatic power, but used to

say, "You have wit, description, and philosophy,—these go a good way towards the production of a novel. It is worth while for you to try the experiment." Her idea was to write a series of stories drawn from her own observation of the clergy. Why one who had ceased to believe that the clergy represented an authentic religion should have chosen that of all subjects, does not appear; but it became abundantly evident in the course of her writings that not a vestige of prejudice existed to prevent her from doing amplest justice to the highest points of a sincere Christian, whether Churchman or Dissenter. Perhaps it seemed to her that such a one might be drawn best from the outside, and from an absolutely neutral point of view. In six weeks the story was finished, and sent by Lewes to Blackwood, as the work of "a friend who desired his good offices."

John Blackwood gave the tale all that anxious consideration which he used to bestow on every new contribution of promise. With his usual intuition he perceived that, if the work of a new hand, it contained the promise of uncommon success. Never one of those who think it wise to be chary of praise, and liking the story better the more he considered it, he wrote her many sympathetic and encouraging letters; and it was in reply to one of these (he

having then no suspicion that his contributor was a woman) that she took for a signature the name by which henceforth she was identified in the world of letters, choosing George because it was Lewes's name, and Eliot as a fluent and euphonious accompaniment. "Mr Gilfil's Love-Story" and "Janet's Repentance" followed (all making their first appearance in the Magazine), and excited interest and speculation to a degree quite uncommon in the case of an anonymous writer treating of themes so level with ordinary life. When published in a collected form, the presentation copies brought acknowledgments from many whose praise was fame. Her old acquaintance Froude, completely mystified, did not know whether he was addressing his eulogy to "a young man or an old—a clergyman or a layman." Mrs Carlyle wrote one of her clever, unconventional, characteristic letters, and says she has conceived the writer in her mind as

"a man of middle age, with a wife, from whom he has got those beautiful *feminine* touches in his book—a good many children, and a dog that he has as much fondness for as I have for my little Nero! For the rest, not just a clergyman, but brother or first cousin to a clergyman."

Dickens wrote her a letter which all his admirers will be glad of—not only warm and generous in

appreciation, but most acute in piercing the veil of her disguise. He stood quite alone in his shrewd and confident guess :—

“I have observed what seemed to me such womanly touches in those moving fictions, that the assurance on the title-page is insufficient to satisfy me even now. If they originated with no woman, I believe that no man ever before had the art of making himself mentally so like a woman since the world began.”

When John Blackwood came to town at this time, and called on Lewes, she consented to reveal herself to that genial friend and editor—titles almost synonymous in his case; for so warm was his sympathy with literary excellence, that the instances, if any, must be few where contributors whom he valued did not find in him a friend for life. It really might be said of him that the business aspect of the relation was the one least present to his mind. His good-fellowship would not let him preserve a formal attitude towards his associates. Next to his natural kin, he placed in affection those to whom he was bound by literary ties; he always seemed to regard his contributors as an unending Christmas-party, gathered together under the jovial auspices of the Magazine. His friendliness invariably tended to express itself in hospitality; he would joyously devise dinners

for bringing old and new supporters of the Magazine pleasantly together, and many a famous book or paper has owed its germ, or part of its merit, to ideas struck out in his dining-room in Edinburgh, or at his cheerful Fifeshire home of Strathtyrum. George Eliot at once, and ever after, cordially recognised what she felt to be her good fortune in lighting on a publisher so genial: her previous ideas of publishers had probably run altogether on formal letters, interviews in offices, dry estimates, and balance-sheets; and there was something of surprise at finding how the business transactions were so mixed up with good offices and friendly care for her interests as to be entirely transfigured. In acknowledging some favourable criticisms which he had transmitted, she says:—

“I am like a deaf person, to whom some one has just shouted that the company round him have been paying him compliments for the last half-hour. Let the best come, you will still be the person outside my own home who *first* gladdened me about ‘Adam Bede,’ and my success will always please me the better because you will share the pleasure.”

In the ‘Scenes of Clerical Life’ she had depicted many real persons so truthfully that there was general recognition of them by their former neighbours at Nuneaton; insomuch that

an inhabitant of the place, aided by her disguise, was tempted to lay claim to the authorship of her works, and actually got some foolish persons to believe in him. But she perceived this kind of portraiture to be not artistically the best. In her next book, while drawing largely on her recollections of what she had seen and heard in early life, she pursued the truer method of using these as materials which imagination should mould for a purpose. In reading 'Adam Bede,' it is impossible not to perceive her inestimable good fortune in having a social origin no higher than to be the daughter of a man who began life as a master carpenter, and ended it as a land agent. Most persons born in a station favourable to the writing of novels, stand far from the inner life of the classes socially beneath them. But here we have the quite new combination of the highest culture dealing with the life of the working classes from their own standpoint. Among the infinite advantages resulting from this, it was one quite unshared by any other writer to have had an aunt who was a Methodist preacher. Years before, this old lady, then about sixty, paid her niece a visit at Griff, and told, among other experiences of her career as an evangelist, how she had once been called on to comfort the last moments in prison of a

country girl, condemned for the murder of her infant, and had accompanied her in the cart to the scaffold. This tale had made a deep impression on Mary Ann; and when, after her first success with the shorter tales, she resolved to try whether she could write a novel, she took this incident as the groundwork of her plot: and thus it chanced that all the charming lifelike personages of the tale—all the humorous and pathetic scenes which place 'Adam Bede' at the head of representations of rural life—received their being from a source which appears to us the least real or admirable part of the work.

It was only the suggestion of the character of Dinah which was derived from the Methodist aunt. That real personage was a little black-eyed woman, full of zeal, but destitute of the grace, the restraint and refinement of enthusiasm, the power of charm, which individualise Dinah. Whether that highly pitched nature was true to itself in consenting to marry the stalwart Adam, we will not undertake to say. No doubt, the later scenes are among the best in the book; no doubt, the reader, not being himself a religious enthusiast, approves of this pretty devout woman turning out to be "not too bright and good for human nature's daily food"—and a reader's content is a legitimate aim in art: nevertheless we are not sure that this pleas-

ing end is not gained by some sacrifice of identity in the heroine ; we are not sure that young Mrs Bede is exactly the same person as Dinah Morris, or has not undergone some declination from that spiritual creature. However that may be, this consummation was early decreed by the author. Lewes, after hearing the opening of the book, suggested that Dinah should marry Adam. It was an obvious enough suggestion, from a plot-making point of view, and was at once accepted ; so that from the third chapter the story bent itself to that comfortable catastrophe.

The artistic value of George Eliot's religious experiences in enabling her to create this her highest character, and many others in that and later novels, is at least as notable as in the Clerical series. Without this element no picture of working life would be true ; it is in that class to which existence is so earnest, in which its evils are so strongly present, and in which reason is but a weak check on impulse, that the religious sentiment is most powerful and contagious. But it is an element very difficult to introduce and to blend harmoniously with the others ; and the excellence of the result is in this case proportionate to the power demanded, for extraordinary force is thus given to the pictures of artisan and peasant life. In dealing

with the more worldly aspect of these, the experiences of her early home are no less important. Her father's daughter, when moving amidst the details of the carpenter's shop, of the farm, of the dairy, was on familiar ground. While keeping house for Robert Evans, she had herself had butter on her mind, and had learned the difficulty of making a farm pay; she had studied from the life the labourers of the field and the cow-shed; she had witnessed the amenities and appreciated the joys of a harvest-supper. Bartle Massey, the schoolmaster, too quaint and animated a character not to have had some grains of reality, may have often looked in for a gossip at Griff; and it must have been recollection, too, that supplied the outward signs of a healthy old age in the elder Martin Poyser. Mrs Poyser, the next best after Dinah, we take it, of her characters, owed her distinctive wit mostly to imagination: the many sagacious apothegms of that practical woman are the golden coinage of her creator's brain.

It seems now merely a matter of course that an immense extension of reputation should have at once followed on the publication of 'Adam Bede,' which took place in February 1859. In March, Blackwood wrote to tell her she was "a popular author as well as a great author." Bul-

wer, whose opinion she thought much of, wrote to Blackwood a letter about the book, which, as might be expected from him, was generously appreciative. "The success," she says, "has been triumphantly beyond anything I had dreamed of." The novel fixed her place in literature, and fixed it so high that it became in some respects a discouragement to her self-distrustful temperament, projecting a dark rather than a luminous shadow on the future, by rendering it so difficult to be equal to herself in a new production. But, very ambitious by nature, and full of ideas to which she was irresistibly impelled to give expression, she found, if not confidence, courage to enter on a new novel. We do not learn by any means so much about either the motive, the framework, or the execution of this as of the former work. It is evident enough that in the recollection of the fraternal relations between her and Isaac the book originated, growing naturally, as it went on, out of Book the First, "Boy and Girl"; and this view is confirmed by the fact that the name first bestowed on the novel was 'Sister Maggie.' Comparing it, while in its early stage, with 'Adam,' she says,—“The characters are on a lower level generally, and the environment less romantic.” She expresses doubt and distrust from time to time, and describes her-

self as "a prisoner in the Castle of Giant Despair, who growls in my ear that the 'Mill on the Floss' is detestable." Nevertheless, the reception of the work brought her full content. It was recognised as of the same brand as 'Adam.' At this time there is no reason, as there was then, for desiring to prove that each succeeding work is as good as its predecessors; and we believe the author was right about "the lower level." The Tullivers are inferior to the Bedes in simplicity, force, and interest; the Gleggs, Dodsons, and Pullets are ordinary compared with the tenants of the Hall Farm, and their characteristics are exaggerated into grotesqueness; while the tragedy of the end handicaps the book, as a disastrous close always does, unless, as in the 'Bride of Lammermoor,' the whole tone and atmosphere is so sombre that no other kind of conclusion is artistically possible—a reason not present here; for Bulwer pointed out, and George Eliot admitted as a fault, that the tragedy is not adequately prepared—meaning, doubtless, that there is nothing in the course of the tale so ruinous of happiness, or so unredeemable, as to render a tragic conclusion inevitable. But throughout the work the same hand is evident as that which wrought 'Adam Bede': the style is no less careful and finished; the views of life are

no less original and uncommon ; and the general reader, thus assured that the guidance was as strong as ever, was content to follow whithersoever it might lead.

In the same year in which 'The Mill on the Floss' was written, she made a first visit to Italy. Of its great cities none made so deep an impression on her as Florence ; and its treasuries of art, of scenery, and of history, inspired her with the idea of writing an historical romance, of which it should be the scene. The same strong tendency which had led her to interfuse in former works the evangelical and the Methodist spirit, now impelled her to choose for the groundwork of her subject the career and martyrdom of Savonarola. To qualify herself for the task of representing the costume and social life of the period, she saturated her mind with Italian lore, and made a second visit to Florence ; and in 'Romola,' which appeared in the 'Cornhill Magazine,' satisfied her admirers that she had lost none of her strength in dealing with a long-past epoch in a foreign land. But before it began to appear, she had published, with Blackwood, the one-volume novel of 'Silas Marner,' a tale of old-fashioned village life, arising out of her dim recollection of having once seen a weaver carrying a bag on his back. In dealing with

the religious fraternity in Lantern Yard, she was once more completely at home. The scenes at Squire Cass's Christmas-party, and at the village alehouse, are as good as any she has drawn; the central incident of the robbery of Marner's gold, and the substitution thereupon of a human for a sordid interest in his life, is new and striking; and Nancy Lammeter is a very pleasant and original heroine. Short as it is, it is probably counted among her best pieces of work.

In her next picture of English life there was an important change of plan. Hitherto, while making use of her own observations and experience, she had cast her tales in a time just before her own childhood. She derived much of her material from what her father told her about his early life. "The time of my father's youth," she says, "never seemed prosaic, for it came to my imagination first through his memories, which made a wondrous perspective to my little daily world of discovery." It was by setting her subject at a certain distance that she saw it at the right focus. "My mind," she says again, "works with most freedom, and the keenest sense of poetry, in my remotest past, and there are many strata to be worked through before I can begin to use, *artistically*, any material I can gather in the present." She now

thought the time had come for adventuring into a later period, and 'Felix Holt' is of the time of the Reform Bill of 1832, when the world was wakening up, and bidding a long farewell to leisure and repose. It cannot be doubted that the earlier epoch best suited her cast of thought. The mellow atmosphere that bathed her pictures of bygone years, faded, with the change of period, into the light of common day. Felix himself is not very distinct; Jermyn is unpleasant throughout, which is a different thing from being bad—a fact not sufficiently accepted by novelists. A minister who, like Rufus Lyon, habitually pitches his discourse in the "peradventure" key, becomes more than ever an anachronism in the later epoch. For these and other reasons, we do not imagine that this novel is now placed among her best; but it was received at the time with no less applause than its predecessors, and its many striking points found eager appreciation.

Of a very ambitious nature—ambitious, that is to say, of the attainment of various excellence and of the praise due to it—she was now impelled to an altogether different enterprise in letters. Another novel, however successful, could scarcely add to her fame,—but what if she could achieve a great poem! She had sound reasons for thinking she could main-

tain a high pitch in poetry. Her prose had the condensity, the felicity, the subtle suggestiveness in epithet and phrase, of fine verse. Her works had been filled with thoughts, imagery, and pictures of the true poetic cast. They seemed to want only the accomplishment of verse to be converted from high prose into high poetry. The change of vehicle was in itself, perhaps, a relief after so much toil, and the 'Spanish Gypsy' was accomplished. It was received favourably by the large audience which was accustomed to greet her: nevertheless it was apparent then, and time has not modified the view, that even when such lofty qualifications as those just enumerated have been put in action, there is still an element, not ascertainable beforehand, which must indispensably form part of the reckoning. That mysterious element—which is as well called inspiration as by any other name—was not found present in the work. It is read with interest, with pleasure, with admiration, but it is not among the poems which the lovers of poetry quote and cherish. It will continue to be of interest, we imagine, not altogether as a poem, but as an exposition of a theory which had for her an extraordinary attraction. When writing 'The Mill on the Floss,' she said, "My stories grow in me like plants." All the best

stories in the world, we imagine, have so grown. But it was natural, as time went on, that the incessant engagement of her mind in problems of life should have led to the evolution of theories, and consequently, in her future works, to a new method of construction—namely, that of making the exposition of the theory the basis of the work, and bending character and incident to fit the theory; a change which seems to us to tell of diminished vividness of conception and diminished power of invention. In her notes on the ‘Spanish Gypsy,’ first published in the volumes under review, the new process is set forth at large. She had seen a picture which inspired her with an idea:—

“I came home with this in my mind, meaning to give the motive a clothing in some suitable set of historical and local conditions. My reflections brought me nothing that would serve me except that moment in Spanish history when the struggle with the Moors was attaining its climax, and when there was the gypsy race present under such conditions as would enable me to get my heroine and the hereditary claim on her among the gypsies. I required the opposition of race to give the need for renouncing the expectation of marriage. I could not use the Jews or the Moors, because the facts of their history were too conspicuously opposed to the working out of my catastrophe. Meanwhile the subject had become more and more pregnant to me. I saw it might be taken as a symbol of the part which is played in the general human lot by hereditary condi-

tions in the largest sense, and of the fact that what we call duty is entirely made up of such conditions; for even in cases of just antagonism to the narrow view of hereditary claims, the whole background of the particular struggle is made up of our inherited nature. Suppose for a moment that our conduct at great epochs was determined entirely by reflection, without the immediate intervention of feeling which supersedes reflection, our determination as to the right would consist in an adjustment of our individual needs to the dire necessities of our lot, partly as to our natural constitution, partly as sharers of life with our fellow-beings. Tragedy consists in the terrible difficulty of this adjustment—

‘The dire strife
Of poor Humanity’s afflicted will,
Struggling in vain with ruthless destiny.’

Looking at individual lots, I seemed to see in each the same story, wrought out with more or less of tragedy, and I determined the elements of my drama under the influence of these ideas. . . .

“The consolatory elements in the ‘Spanish Gypsy’ are derived from two convictions or sentiments which so conspicuously pervade it, that they may be said to be its very warp on which the whole action is woven. These are,—(1) The importance of individual deeds; (2) The all-sufficiency of the soul’s passions in determining sympathetic action.

“In *Silva* is presented the claim of fidelity to social pledges; in *Fedalma*, the claim constituted by an hereditary lot less consciously shared.”

The reader cannot fail to see what a differ-

ence there is between a scheme of this kind, and that pursued in the early novels. In this later method the story must partake largely of allegory, and will consequently infallibly lose value as a picture of life. The Spanish Gypsy is a metaphysical and ethnological problem in action. In all the later novels the plan is more or less founded on theory. The hero in 'Felix Holt,' Dorothea and Casaubon and Lydgate, Deronda and Mordecai, are so many problems dramatised, and the characters express themselves less, and are described and discussed more, even voluminously.

Nevertheless a common spirit animates all her books, though it does not continue to manifest itself in the same form. At the root of George Eliot's genius lay an extraordinarily deep and ever-present sense of the significance of human existence. Her relations with the world in which she found herself, both with its past and its present, pressed so incessantly and so forcibly on the springs of interest and curiosity that there seems to have been hardly a moment when she was not observing, speculating, or analysing, and recording the results. The world within and the world without never ceased to be, for her, wonder-lands. Other famous writers, notably Carlyle, have made the significance of life their theme. But by him it

was treated in a sardonic spirit, as if mocking at the pettiness and failure of most of the actors who have figured in a drama so momentous. In her case, sympathy with the actors was not less intense than wonder at the drama. It is difficult to say what there is in life, not obviously vile or futile, which did not keenly interest her, and she was thus led into a range of inquiry far beyond that of the ordinary learned woman. It appears to us that her interest in the race was deeper than in the individual; that she was more strongly attracted by varieties of life in the abstract than by persons—unless, indeed, by such as, embodying some epoch or crisis of thought or of action, conveniently presented to her a problem in the concrete. Art in all its modes of representing nature—philosophy in all its investigations of the internal and external worlds—were the familiar fields of her mental exercises. All this, however, would merely have made her a marvel of information but for the development of the constructive faculty—the power, so suddenly evinced that it may be said to have surprised herself, of arranging her stores and forming with them mental pictures. Happily for the manifestation of her genius, to all this was added an extraordinary aptitude of expression. Perhaps the most distinctive fea-

ture of her literary faculty is her power of seeing and stating brief problems of life, and so conveying in a sentence the result of a process of observation and thought. In her earlier works these were eminently happy, and so plain in their pithiness as to contribute greatly to her popularity. But in her later period her style lost much of this lightness; the presentation of the idea (possibly in itself less weighty and less clear) was so laden with accumulations in the effort after completeness and fulness, that the mind, no longer taking it in pleasantly and at once, had to deal with it like a proposition of Euclid. The habit, too, of using phrases and illustrations borrowed from science grew on her, and did not always tend to lucidity: thus, in the first sentence of 'Deronda' we find a glance mentioned as of a "dynamic quality"—an expression of which we (though not destitute of some tincture of dynamical instruction) have failed to this day to see the applicability. It is observable, too, that the human interest of her tales diminished, and latterly those readers were best pleased who enjoyed tasting the philosophy of the author more than following the story. But, like all great writers, she created her own public, and held it in firm allegiance to the end. We have heard a very experienced judge of literature affirm 'Middle-

march' to be not merely *her* greatest, but *the* greatest novel.

"No former book of mine," she says, "has been received with more enthusiasm, not even 'Adam Bede.' . . . People seem so bent on giving supremacy to 'Middlemarch' that they are sure not to like any future book so well."

Jews and Jewesses, even rabbis and professors, expressed their admiration and gratitude for 'Deronda,' and we imagine that it met with Gentile appreciators no less ardent. "The success of the work at present," writes the author, "is greater than that of 'Middlemarch' up to the corresponding point of publication."

Her intense absorbing interest in human life was also the basis of the creed which, in default of other, George Eliot adopted. We have seen how she cast off her early and earnest belief: nothing which concerns her can be more interesting to the admirers of her works than to know what substitute she found for it, for her new opinions imbue all her writings, and form a necessary key to them. We will therefore endeavour to give some account of them.

It does not appear that philosophy had any share in inspiring the doubts which led her to abandon her former persuasions; but she must have acquired, immediately afterwards, fresh

grounds for confidence in her new opinions from the friends with whom she was most intimately associated in London, and who had arrived at their conclusions from a direction entirely different. Their conclusions required them to accept nothing as fit to form part of a system, either of philosophy or religion, which is not based on fact and capable of being made apparent to the reason. They asserted, not that all else was non-existent, but that it was unknowable, and outside the region of inquiry or theory. Consequently they practically assumed this world as the be-all and the end-all of human existence. In its conditions, as interpreted by science, they found the beginnings, and traced the development, of man as we see him, and declined to consider any possibilities before or after as other than unscientific fancies. For them spirit, with its light of conscience, are evolutions, produced in immeasurably long process by the conditions of the material world, and the action and reaction on each other of the minds of its inhabitants. They find obvious the inference that the spirit thus earth-born will of necessity share the dissolution of the body—dust it is, and unto dust shall it return. Without denying the existence of an unknown cause, they do deny that the conception of it can be a proper basis of a practical religion.

For them a deity has, in all ages, and with all peoples, been an invention of man's mind, stimulated by man's hopes and fears—as the Brocken Spectre is the immensely exaggerated shadow, cast on a cloud, of the spectator's own figure. Thus, after rejecting the familiar belief that God created man, these philosophers are conducted to the very opposite conclusion that man created God. In the presence of this faith, not only revelation and miracle, but a great number of beliefs which were universal, and existed apart from the religious systems of which they formed the basis, are swept away,—the belief in a personal deity to whom man is responsible, that the conscience is a spark of divinity, that a future life will repair the inequalities of this, and that the soul's portion in it will be in accordance with its deserts while on earth. In these negations some of these freethinkers rested, pushing their inquiries in science only. But to others there appeared much risk in depriving the human race, even as it is known to philosophers, of all those powerfully inspiring and powerfully controlling influences which religion has supplied; they perceived also that any system dealing with humanity must admit a tendency to religious belief as an element in the constitution of man. In the writings of Comte these speculators found what they

wanted. Closely associated with his views in science and polity was set forth the doctrine of a "religion of humanity," the whole forming what is known as the Positive philosophy. When this life is all, its value is increased infinitely. As all qualities ascribed to unseen powers worshipped by man have been emanations from humanity itself, so humanity itself is a fit object of worship. By fostering all that is best in it, by steadily inculcating that the elevation of the race is a duty to which every individual may be trained, a millennium is to be finally reached in which this world is to be the scene of light and harmony. For Comte's writings George Eliot had deep admiration and sympathy, and warmly acknowledged her great debt to him. Without being a declared adherent of his philosophy or religion, she explicitly avows her gratitude for the illumination he had contributed to her life. Dr Congreve, the chief evangelist of the religion of humanity in this country, was her intimate friend, and his wife her constant correspondent. Dr Congreve described the 'Spanish Gypsy' as a "mass of Positivism." With this preamble, we will present to the reader (who must not expect anything very explicit) some passages from her letters and works which seem to have most relation to the subject:—

“My books have for their main bearing a conclusion without which I could not have cared to write any representation of human life—namely, that the fellowship between man and man which has been the principle of development, social and moral, is not dependent on conceptions of what is not man; and that the idea of God, so far as it has been a high spiritual influence, is the idea of a goodness entirely human (*i.e.*, an exaltation of the human).”

“Love, pity, constituting sympathy, and generous joy with regard to the lot of our fellow-men comes in—has been growing since the beginning—enormously enhanced by wider vision of results—by an imagination actively interested in the lot of mankind generally; and these feelings become piety—*i.e.*, loving, willing submission, and heroic Promethean effort, towards high possibilities, which may result from our individual life.

“There is really no moral ‘sanction’ but this inward impulse. The will of God is the same thing as the will of other men, compelling us to work and avoid what they have seen to be harmful to social existence. Disjoined from any perceived good, the divine will is simply so much as we have ascertained of the facts of existence which compel obedience at our peril. Any other notion comes from the supposition of arbitrary revelation.”

This is the motto to one of her short tales:—

“Give me no light, great heaven, but such as turns
To energy of human fellowship;
No powers save the growing heritage
That makes completer manhood.”

“The progress of the world can certainly never come at all save by the modified action of the individual

beings who compose the world, and that we can say to ourselves with effect, 'There is an order of considerations which I will keep myself continually in mind of, so that they may continually be the prompters of certain feelings and actions,' seems to me as undeniable as that we can resolve to study the Semitic languages and apply to an oriental scholar to give us daily lessons."

"In her general attitude towards life," says her biographer, "George Eliot was neither optimist nor pessimist. She held to the middle term which she invented for herself of 'meliorist.' She was cheered by the hope and by the belief in gradual improvement of the mass; for in her view each individual must find the better part of happiness in helping another."

"Will you believe," she writes, "that an accomplished man some years ago said to me, that he saw no place for the exercise of *resignation*, when there was no personal divine will contemplated as ordaining sorrow or privation? He is not yet aware that he is getting old, and needing that unembittered compliance of soul with the inevitable, which seems to me a full enough meaning for the word 'resignation.'"

"I fear," she writes to Mrs Bray, "the fatal fact about your story is the absence of God and hell. 'My dear madam, you have not presented motives to the children!' It is really hideous to find that those who sit in the scribes' seats have got no further than the appeal to selfishness, which they call God."

She is fond of affirming that high effort, though it fail, is not failure:—

"My impression of the good there is in all unselfish efforts is continually strengthened. Doubtless many a

ship is drowned on expeditions of discovery or rescue, and precious freights lie buried. But there was the good of manning and furnishing the ship with a great purpose before it set out."

On the death of Mazzini she writes :—

"Such a man leaves behind him a wider good than the loss of his personal presence can take away.

"'The greatest gift the hero leaves his race,
Is to have been a hero.'

"I must be excused for quoting my own words, because they are my *credo*."

Of her life with Lewes she writes :—

"Our unspeakable joy in each other has no other alloy than the sense that it must one day end in parting."

"The approach of parting is the bitterness of age."

"The realm of silence is large enough beyond the grave. This is the world of light and speech."

"I desire," she writes in her journal, "no added blessing for the coming year but this,—that I may do some good lasting work, and make both my outward and inward habits less imperfect—that is, more directly tending to the best uses of life."

To a friend she writes :—

"For nearly a year death seems to me my most intimate daily companion. I mingle the thought of it with every other, not sadly, but as one mingles the thought of some one who is nearest in love and duty with all one's motives. I try to delight in the sunshine that will be when I shall never see it any more. And I think it is possible for this sort of impersonal life to at-

tain great intensity,—possible for us to gain much more independence, than is usually believed, of the small bundle of facts that make our own personality.”

This last sentiment has been expanded in the best known of her verses, which have been adopted, we believe, as a Positivist hymn, because they express so well the belief of the sect in all that man can call his future. They have been too often quoted to be introduced here. They admit of the construction that the dead are immortal only in the sense that their good deeds and example have entered into many lives, inspiring fresh endeavours for the exaltation of humanity, and that thus they may be said to have a continued life on earth. “So to live is heaven;” “This is life to come”—are the conclusions announced in the hymn. Her poems are more explicit on the subject of her religious philosophy, and convey it in a clearer and more compact fashion, than her prose writings. We have seen the ‘Spanish Gypsy’ recognised as a mass of Positivism; the ‘Legend of Jubal’ is no less so, being entirely founded on, and illustrative of, the doctrine that man’s future life is in his works. “Stradivarius” repeats the theme; and “A Minor Prophet,” the dream of the scientific man, of the material world of the future as modified by science, is only the foil to her own dream of the moral

world of the future as modified by the religion of humanity.

All this, vague enough as a profession of faith, is in unison, so far as it goes, with the principles of Positivism. We do not know that anything of importance will at any time be added to the foregoing evidence of what George Eliot had adopted as her creed. It is very evident that the religion thus constituted is only the projected image of her own spirit. Her intense enjoyment of life, her curiosity and interest in all that concerns the race, her natural goodness, her freedom from common temptations, rendered easy for her the adoption of the doctrine that we should shape our lives for the benefit of humanity at large. She would have done this—at any rate she would have done as she did—without consciously holding any such creed. She would have talked Positivism as Monsieur Jourdain talked prose. Had she never heard of Comte or Dr Congreve, she would have been a disciple of the religion of humanity. Its shaping effect was not on her nature, but on her works. When it had assumed for her an organised and external form, she became its apostle. In place of representing life as she observed it, she represented it with reference to the religion of humanity. In place of depicting people as she found them,

she depicted them as shaped or controlled by a theoretical influence. Whether we think this an advantage may be gathered from preceding passages in this paper.

It is to be noted that George Eliot is in unison with the Positivists up to a certain point only. While they have, for the manifestation of their religion, a sort of liturgy and a church, there is no evidence that she ever considered humanity to be a proper object of worship. With this exception they would probably consider her creed to be in accord with theirs. It may, as in her case, and doubtless in many others, be a possible rule of life for individual natures. But it must also be judged as a means for its professed end, of effecting, through general acceptance, the exaltation of humanity. For this it demands that every member shall, in the way for which his abilities best suit him, labour for the good of the race, sinking his own private interests in those of humanity. For reward, he must derive what satisfaction he can from the sense that his efforts in this direction have not been unavailing. So pure and disinterested is this faith, so sublimated from all motives other than the highest, that, judged by it, the desire to do right from the hope of attaining heaven or avoiding hell is mere selfishness. Such a religion is evidently suited

only to saints and Positivists. It appeals to nothing which actuates the multitude. It demands a sacrifice of self which only a few recorded characters have been found capable of. It requires us to put all we possess into a sinking fund for the benefit of nobody knows whom. It wants the powerful element of hope, for its promises are limited to the hazy expectation of an indefinitely distant possibility, less than the shadow of a shade. George Eliot, with a view to adapting the doctrine to common use, would confine the endeavours of ordinary natures to the task of furthering the happiness and advantage of those immediately around them. But we think the youth of this country have long been familiar with so much Positivism as that, in the Church Catechism. In common with the Positivists she had, we learn, "great hope for the future in the improvement of human nature by the gradual development of the affections and the sympathetic emotions,"—though what she found in the past to give reason for such expectation, we do not learn. The high and exclusive devotion to humanity on which the religion is based can only be a rule of life to a few who, in its absence, would have conformed to its precepts. As a means for effecting the ambitious design of influencing and modifying

the race, its demands on human nature are impossible to be satisfied, its allurements cold and dim : it might have been conceived in the moon, and for the inhabitants of the moon ; it is such stuff as dreams are made of.

Now that this famous woman has quitted the scene, the world would gladly know somewhat of her life as apart from her works. These three volumes contain her biography, chiefly as recorded by herself in journals and letters to intimate friends, the links being supplied sparingly and judiciously by Mr Cross, whose one thought in the matter has evidently been how best to let her speak for herself. "In authorship," she says, "I hold carelessness to be a mortal sin ;" and this rule she extended no less stringently to her correspondence. The plan on which the letters and journals have been sifted, and formed into what closely resembles an autobiography, is novel, and says much for the originality and skill of the biographer. In these records the reader will follow her steps in life from childhood, will learn what were the influences that moulded her character, the history of her literary career and of her domestic life, the impressions derived from foreign travel, what she thought of eminent contemporaries, and what manner of people were her chosen friends. He will enjoy, for

the most part, the immense advantage of finding all these interesting matters chronicled by herself; and such additions as Mr Cross has made, while indispensable to completeness, are as valuable as they are unobtrusive. The many devoted students of her works will receive a new pleasure in reading them again along with the present biography, which sheds on them quite an illumination, and will, we should think, be regarded as their indispensable companion on the book-shelf.

Her later life was in one respect very singular. Lewes's care for her was so alert and prospective, that she may be said to have dwelt like some princess in a fairy tale, guarded by spells against annoyance. He conducted all business, even answered all letters for her to other than her intimate friends. He sifted the reviews of her works, that she might be hurt by no censure; he even warned correspondents against using too much freedom in criticism. His habits made him her constant companion—no small fret could elude his vigilance, and his chief happiness lay in ministering to her comfort. The modest mansion in St John's Wood was as quiet and secluded as if it stood on the outskirts of a village. Here her hours of work and study were absolutely sacred. On Sunday afternoons she was at home to visitors, and

there were few of her eminent contemporaries who did not at one time or other come to offer her genuine homage. While enjoying the best of social intercourse at will, she held herself free from its exactions, the labours in which the public were so deeply interested forming ample ground for the exemption. When in need of fresher air she and Lewes repaired to their country house, situated in a part of Surrey chosen for its agreeable qualities, and where many valued friends lived within a drive. Tennyson was one of these, and any records that may have been preserved of their meetings and their "wit-combats" will seem gold-lettered to posterity as it looks back on the Victorian age. Such a life is evidently what many sigh for but few attain. Indeed, had she been less sensitive, and her health less frail in later life, we would say she was altogether too sedulously sheltered from care. This was not the kind of life in which she received and stored up her early and fresh impressions. The artist who would describe his own time must keep touch with it, must receive its form and pressure, not in the study, but by actual contact with his fellows, by mingling in their affairs, by being penetrated with their hopes and fears, by knowing disappointment as well as success, by facing the difficulties no

less than by enjoying the pleasures of life. But it is possible that, in the actual circumstances, devotion and encouragement, ease and leisure, were the necessary conditions for doing her work after the flush and buoyancy of youth were past. However this may be, it is certain that she was surrounded in a remarkable degree by all that can lend warmth and sunshine to the advance of life. The most anxious affection did not cease for long to surround her when she lost Lewes. Her marriage to the present biographer gave the most complete and secure promise of a serene evening. He had long been an intimate and dear friend, and, on the death of Lewes, had been prompt to afford such active sympathy as only a very uncommon devotion could inspire. Her correspondence after her marriage testifies how unceasing was his care for her, how acute and grateful her sense of it. But the union was of very short duration; she died within the twelvemonth, leaving only the consolation that her sixty-one years had been bright and happy to the close.

THE PICTURES OF RICHARD DOYLE.

AN inhabitant of Florence, in Dante's time, pointed out the poet as "the man who had been in hell." Richard Doyle might well enjoy the more pleasing designation of the man who had been in Elfland. He spent much of his time there, and brought away a great deal of information about the manners and customs of its inhabitants. Excepting Mr Lemuel Gulliver, nobody has been keener in observing and describing the features of a strange country and state of society. These we find recorded in many of Doyle's delightful sketches and pictures, of which, from our recollections of them at the very complete exhibition of his works since his death, and elsewhere, we shall endeavour to give a chronicle and brief abstract.

In the first place, he amply confirms the common notion that fairies, sprites, elves, and

goblins are not troubled with a pressing sense of the responsibilities of existence, but take life in a desultory, devil-may-care sort of fashion. Nothing like settled business casts its shadow over them. None of them appears ever to have kept a shop or a counting-house, or to have contributed in the least degree to the cultivation of the soil. The utilitarian doctrines not only do not prevail, but do not exist among them. Their state affairs are entirely ceremonial. They never had a legislative assembly, though the waste of time, idle talk, foolish jest, and absence of common-sense, which prevail in such places, would not be foreign to their habits. Trades must have existed among them, since they are generally (though not always) clothed, the upper classes in robes, and the multitude in the fashions preserved since Elizabeth's time—doublets, tight hose, short cloaks, pointed caps, and long-toed shoes. Weavers, men's tailors and women's tailors, shoemakers, &c., must therefore have existed somewhere, possibly as slaves immured in workshops. But as the whole population was always ready to swarm forth at a moment's notice, for sport or mischief, as if bank holiday were perpetual, their occupations could never have been of an exacting kind. Thus (we learn) a venturous equestrian having come

on a party of them revelling on the sea-shore, and snatched up one of their goblets, all Elf-land, male and female, old and young, is represented as in pursuit of the marauder. The only sprite (according to Doyle) that has ever evinced a steady purpose, is one clad in white, who makes it her business to haunt a particular bridge, and allows no one to cross who does not kneel to her. Forming the only bright spot in the picture, except her own reflection in the water, she sits in the midst of an admirably painted piece of woodland which frames an arched passage for the course of the stream. This sprite has evidently suffered some great wrong, most likely from a male sprite, leading her to follow the example of the misanthrope mentioned by Mr Weller, who "kept a 'pike and rewenged himself on society by taking tolls." But in general they seem to have no object beyond the impulse of the moment. Thus a fairy encountering an owl, on turf or in tree, is impelled to fondle the solemn bird, who, as might be expected from his imperturbable character, merely tolerates the familiarity without any kind of response. In some of these pictorial records, whole rows of elves are seated each beside his or her owl. But this infatuation for owls is evidently of the most transient nature, and would be dissolved

instantly on the opportunity of some other diversion, such as a race or a gallop. For this purpose they will mount a flock of small birds, or bound on the backs of the inhabitants of a rabbit-warren, and launch forth on a wild and reckless career. The rabbit, though very delightful to sit upon—his downy back being more comfortable, especially to the unclad, than the best saddle that ever came out of Piccadilly, and his ears pleasanter to the grasp than either snaffle or curb-rein—is yet an uncertain kind of steed, as the many mishaps shown in the course of a run testify; while his habit of disappearing suddenly in a hole is such as the first equestrians can hardly be expected to contend against. Sometimes a troop on the ramble will vault on the backs of a flock of geese, and urge them with outstretched necks and striding webs across the common; but even a goose will turn when rode upon, and a dismounted jockey is being severely pecked by his feathered courser. The back of the lowly beetle pursuing his deliberate way to a point a few yards off, where he may possibly arrive in the course of the night, is not disdained by the elf disposed for equestrian exercise. But the most poetical of all the coursers bestridden by elf or fairy is the bat. A whole company thus mounted are rising into the air from the banks

of a reedy lake. No less than four pictures represent Ariel, the prince of elves, as borne thus in solitary wavering flight through the sky. Now he is going aloft in the light of the high full moon, only his face, that of a chubby child, seen over the head of the bat round whose neck his arms are thrown. Anon he is seated gracefully upright, clasping his knees between the brown pinions, himself equipped with short wings like those of a pretty moth, and evidently on confidential terms with his steed, who turns his head upward towards the rider; and in this drawing only, the crescent moon is seen with admirable effect through the elaborate pattern of the bat's leathern wing, while two stars struggle through the dim blue vapour of the air. Again we see him seated with his face to the bat's tail, soaring in a higher, calmer region, no stars above nor landscape below. Lastly, led into forgetfulness of time by the fascinating nature of his excursion, he is surprised by the red streaks of dawn, as they stretch between the dim earth and the awakening sky, tipping with crimson the rocks that bound the small estuary over which he happens to be flying. Why Ariel, who could go swift as an arrow from a Tartar's bow, should have found diversion in so slow a conveyance as the winged mouse, we cannot ac-

count for otherwise than by supposing that, while pegged in the entrails of the cloven pine from which Prospero released him, he naturally became acquainted with his fellow-tenants who would be hanging by the heels in that retreat, and formed with them a lifelong friendship, doing equal credit to his head and heart.

The tenants of fairyland seem sometimes to have experienced an impulse towards benevolence or usefulness; but it was probably accidental, and only the result of a desire to amuse themselves. Thus a musical fairy is giving a singing lesson to a number of small birds, but happily without having induced them to abandon their natural notes. And two pictures commemorate a practice of the fairies of combing and dressing the goats' beards on Saturday night, to make them smart for Sunday. The ceremony, or assignation, takes place on a hillside—partly bright with sunset, partly darkened with the shadow of approaching night. The sylph beauties—possessing, let us hope, only an imperfect sense of smell—devote themselves with a will to their task,—combing, twining, and plaiting the tufted chins; while the billygoats submit with good grace to the fascinating barbers, except one restive capricorn who gallops away, and another that from behind a rock peeps furtively at his hairdresser,

who beckons him with cajoling finger. This subject (as we told the artist) ought to have been treated by Herkomer. However, as a rule, they make no pretence to benevolence, but rather the contrary. Thus a number of them, as if the agents of an Imperial Chancellor, are egging on two frogs to fight, by taunts and suggestions of good grounds for quarrel, as wounded honour and so forth. Another mocks and gibes at a large toad, whose profoundly meditative and sedentary aspect precludes all idea of possible provocation. For some reason the lesser amphibia are not esteemed in elfland, and when not objects of hostility are exposed to practical jokes. No elf can pass a frog without jeering at him, or, if coming on him from behind, using him for the purpose of giving a back—a practice which explains the name of a popular game. The cause of this ill-feeling is to be found in one of the largest pictures, the "Battle of Elves and Frogs." At some remote, even prehistoric period, a *casus belli* arose between the two peoples; perhaps a frog ambassador had been disrespectful to Oberon—or the elves may have wished to establish a stable government in some distant and populous swamp: anyhow, war alone could decide the matter. The elves took up a strong position on a rising ground, at the foot of which was a

natural moat, in the shape of a reedy pond. And here we see how the rules of war are subject to change under novel circumstances. In ordinary cases a bridge would have been necessary in order to approach the position. But the gallant frogs, flinging themselves boldly into one of their native elements, have crossed the obstacle and scaled the heights. Some of the most forward spirits of the amphibious army have forced their way up to the very mound where the elf-king and leader has stationed himself, like Harold at Hastings, and have even turned his flank. But the sprites, in loose formation, have met the enemy, some of whom, their retreat accelerated by panic, are already describing wonderful parabolas in the air on their way to the pond. In the centre of the picture, a speckled champion is receiving full in his yellow stomach the thrust of a spear of grass. A frog's countenance would not seem to lend itself to much play of feature, but his is not inexpressive of anguish. As in a mediæval battle, prisoners are led away on both sides. The captive frogs were apparently held to ransom, but the goblins are placed *hors de combat* by being dropped into the pond. The frog general is slyly represented as keeping well out of the battle on the opposite shore, attended by an obsequious staff. No doubt

the elves prevailed ; for, as we have seen, they have treated the frogs ever since as a subject people. Most likely Mr Doyle found the narrative of this celebrated action, which he calls the sixteenth decisive battle of the world, in some ancient fairy chronicle, or perhaps woven in goblin tapestry, and hung on the walls of a palace in that strange country.

In much later times the elves met in battle a far more formidable enemy, the Crows,—not the Indian tribe of that name, but the predatory race against whom we ourselves wage war, chiefly with scarecrows—a kind of troops possessing but little manœuvring power, and from whom Mr Childers probably took his idea of short-service soldiers. The elves, as before, took up a strong position on a knoll crowned with an ancient tower ; but against an enemy who descends from the air, advantages of ground do not count for much. The battle is very desperate : when elf meets crow, then comes the tug of war. Many elves are prostrate, and are being violently pecked ; one has his pointed cap torn from his head—which is probably held as equivalent to taking his scalp. On the other hand, crows have fallen, and one in the distance is coming to earth transfixed by a goblin's arrow. Only the advanced-guard of the crows is engaged ; their supports are formed

on a neighbouring group of leafless trees, while the battalions of reserve are coming up in such numbers as to darken the sky. If the commander of the rooks is not a mere vain babbler, cawing for ever in his own glorification, but an able tactician, he has evidently great chances open to him. The landscape of this picture is one of the best that Doyle ever painted: the evening sky darkened by the cloud of birds, the trees in the inundated meadow, the ancient tower, are all of high order, and produce a most harmonious evening effect.

It has long been known that the government of fairyland is in form monarchical. The consort of the fairy king is treated with high respect, and, next to war, the most serious business of her subjects is the manifestation of respect and loyalty for her person. This takes a form quite different from our municipal addresses and deputations. In a small picture the elf-queen is seen seated in the moonlight on a tall mushroom, while around her, wheel in an informal dance her courtier-circle, each footing it according to his own notion of a step—an improved form of demonstration which we recommend to the consideration of the Lord Mayor and Common Council. The court seems to be constituted mainly on the principles of those of Europe, except that many of the

courtiers are without clothes : there are young maids-of-honour, equerries, &c., descended, no doubt, from the ancient families of Cobweb, Peas-blossom, and Mustard-seed ; while grey-beard officers of state are not wanting, figuring as Masters of the Ceremonies and old Sticks-in-Waiting. The whole circle are apt to flow forth in strange revelry, following some sudden impulse. Mr Doyle, while drawing a woodland dell in his best manner, once saw the whole court threading their way like a stream of coloured light under the broad leaves of the water-plants that grew on the margin of a pool, where they had disturbed, but not alarmed, a solitary kingfisher. And again in sportive moments, they have disguised themselves in Watteau-like costumes, and, bewigged and be-hooped, enacted, under the ancient trees of parks and lawns, the revels of long-departed owners and their guests.

It is apparently the fairy queen's gracious habit to sleep in any suitable spot, surrounded with her court. We find her thus reposing on the rocky shore of a mountain-tarn. The moonlight is painted in this picture with remarkable effect ; and we thus learn that fairies do not always spend the night in roaming, which may be one reason why they are not to be seen any or every night, but sometimes

prefer to sleep beneath the chaste beams of the watery moon. The fairy king seems to entertain unsocial and unconnubial views on the subject of repose; for we find him, betwixt afternoon and evening, asleep by himself under a hollow bank amid the roots of a tree, while overhead float slowly, guarding his slumbers, the lords and ladies of the bedchamber. After the lapse of so many ages since the time of the 'Midsummer Night's Dream,' the queen seems still occasionally to add to the legitimate succession; for we find her in one pretty scene nursing an elf-baby, with her crown on, while a blue-clad fairy, possibly an elder sister, helps to tend and fondle the royal infant.

No living naturalist knows so much about dragons as Doyle. Next to fairies, he has studied them more than any other province of animated nature. For the most part they have been hostile to man, to the extent of habitually dining on human virgins; and many knights since St George have sought to win fame, and the favour of the rescued maidens, by defying them to single combat. Our artist shows us, not the combat itself, which has perhaps been so often treated by medieval painters as to be incapable of fresh presentation, but the preface and the last scene. Thus the historic dragon of Wantley, roused by the loud challenge of

the champion who defies him from the summit of the rock, is issuing from his craggy lair with an aspect suggestive of irritated feeling and bad language, which reminds us of the felonious inmate of a London slum once visited by Dickens, who looked out of window angrily demanding, "What the adjective substantive do you want here?" The end of the combat, under the title of "The Return of the Dragon-slayer," is a favourite subject with Doyle, who evidently commemorates several distinct events of this kind—for whereas in one the dragon, slain, is dragged by the tail, in others he is led in captive by his conqueror (in one case with the knight's pocket - handkerchief tied over the dragon's eye, injured in the conflict); and in a drawing which we remember as exhibited a few years ago, the reptile's longitude was such, that although he extended along an entire street, his tail was still round the corner. But in all cases the knight caracoles proudly through the town, amidst the applause of the populace and the greetings of civic functionary, dame, and demoiselle—everybody admiring and congratulating, except another knight who preserves a lofty and disdainful aspect, to show how lightly a warrior of his prowess esteems such feats. The dragon was not always, however, the enemy of man; he had his softer

moments, as when he is seen playing chess with a princess, and he could even make himself useful. It is well known that the christening of earthly princes and princesses is frequently attended by powerful fairies, their godmothers, who bestow on them various excellences of mind and person, though with what result in after-life has never been quite clear. One of these generous sponsors is depicted as coming forth from the palace after the ceremony, to return to her own dominions; and, for conveyance, at the door is waiting her dragon, who has of necessity been kept in the street during the visit, as no building shorter than the Thames tunnel could have stabled an animal of his extent. This dragon is submitting to be held by a smart goblin-groom whom he could have swallowed like an oyster, and is good-humouredly unconscious that some street-boys, distant a few minutes' walk, are taking liberties with his tail.

Incidentally we learn from Doyle a good deal about the personal attributes of dragons. We perceive that as there are one-humped and two-humped camels, and one-horned and two-horned rhinoceroses, so there are one-headed and two-headed dragons. One groom, however, suffices to hold a two-headed dragon, used for draught or riding, as he might suffice for a pair of

horses. Besides the teeth and claws, the spiky wings, shaped on the principle of holly-leaves, would cause considerable annoyance to an antagonist if vigorously flapped about his head ; and further, the end of the tail is furnished with an arrow-head sting, which, if time permits, can be brought up and buried in the body of the foe. Also, the dragon's eyes burn and his breath smokes, as if from an internal furnace ; so that the knight who would tackle him would find, altogether, a very ugly customer. We see also that the tradition expressed in the tavern sign of the Green Dragon is a true one—the creature's coat-of-mail is of the sheen of the ivy-leaf ; and though Campbell tells us how War “yoked the *red* dragons of her iron car,” we may, on Doyle's authority, safely affirm of the dragon's colour, as of the chameleon's, “'Tis green—'tis green, sir, I assure ye.”

One of the most curious and unexpected facts of dragon-life which our artist has brought to light is that respecting the young brood. Having supposed them to be rare animals, we were surprised to find them existing in flocks, hatched apparently from eggs, and used as a kind of farm-stock. Several representations show us witches driving young dragons to market. Who the purchasers can be of these strange articles of commerce we cannot divine—perhaps

they are bought up by dealers who, after breaking them to harness or saddle, sell them to rich fairies. In one case the sorceress, young and not ungraceful, and clad in diaphanous drapery is descending a mountain-side in misty moonlight; in another, an old witch, of the kind that Macbeth knew of, is driving with outstretched broom her singular poultry along the shore of a lake, on the margin of which stands a ruined monastery. In all cases the character of the flock is much the same: though quite newly hatched—for they are no bigger than turkeys—there is plenty of latent truculence to be developed with maturity; they show the fire of the race glowing in eye and nostril, and are extremely troublesome to drive.

It was pleasant to see last year, at the Institute in Piccadilly, an indication that an artist, Mr Fitzgerald, existed among us capable of carrying on the traditions of Doyle. He had chosen for his subject a hare just escaped from the hounds, and resting within a screen of grass and brambles. In the distance the hunters and the pack are seen jogging homeward against the evening sky. Round the fugitive are drawing the pitying fairy population of the district. A sylph, splendidly clad, is floating towards her, expressing as plainly as looks may, "Poor dear!" while another in white raiment pats

her panting breast. Two sprites that have woven a necklace of grass are putting it round the hare's neck; two more are bringing her red berries, as a slight refreshment after her exertions—the one presenting the offering on a leaf-platter, the other on the point of a thorn. An elf in scarlet, seated easily, though it might be thought uncomfortably, on the stem of a bramble, is watching the hunters, evidently in order to give notice if they should return. And besides these, the grass and stems are populous with quaint forms, half sprite, half insect, who have no particular concern in the hare, but have been disturbed by the commotion, as a swarm of flies by an approaching step. This drawing, beautifully executed, is the more welcome as showing the race to be actuated by the novel impulse of benevolence.

When not employed in his more serious and important function of showing us what goes on in fairy and dragon circles, Mr Doyle could relax into representations of our own scenery. He could show us the leafy recesses of a dell in Devonshire, or the stately towers of a baronial castle in the North. One of his best landscapes represents the park and seat of Sir Wilfrid Lawson, which, contrary to what might be anticipated respecting the surroundings of

that apostle of temperance, contains no water, but is full of spirit. On the verge of the crowded tombstones of Haworth churchyard, he has placed the dreary parsonage where the Brontës lived their intense imaginative lives—the picture being perhaps his reply to the question, “Tell me, where is Fancy bred?” In early days he gave us the many comic outlines of daily life which adorned ‘Punch,’ and the grotesque illustrations of our national history which he describes as rejected in the competition for decorating the walls of Westminster. But his real business lay with the scenery of that pleasant moonlit land where Oberon ruled in the days of Duke Theseus and Bully Bottom, and which in more recent times had been illustrated by the French fairy chroniclers, Perrault and Madame d’Aulnois.

A superficial observer would never have guessed from Mr Doyle’s aspect that he was connected intimately with the inhabitants of fairyland, or painter-in-ordinary to its royal family. Goodly of stature, he was also substantial of person, and could not be thought of for a moment as one who could join in racing on rabbits, leaping over toadstools, riding on bats, or floating about clothed in glorified cobwebs; nor, on the other hand, was he of a temper to challenge dragons to combat. Kind and

pleasant of discourse, gentle of voice, courteous of bearing, his value as a companion was very widely recognised, and his society was much coveted by the Titanias of Mayfair and Belgravia. His agreeable humour was by no means restricted to his pictures: he was quaint in speech as in art; and his way of showing that something uttered had amused him — by retiring into his cravat, in the recesses of which a soft smothered laugh would be heard, and then emerging to cap the jest — was special to himself. For the many who appreciated him, some of the brightness and grace which spread a wholesome illusion over common life died out of the world last year with Richard Doyle.

MR HAYWARD AND HIS LETTERS.¹

WHEN Mr Hayward died nearly three years ago, he had been for a long time a remarkable figure in the social life of London. What it was that made him notable did not at first sight appear. He had been bred to the Bar, and had attained to the dignity of Queen's Counsel, but he had for long abandoned the practice of his profession. He wrote reviews in an exceedingly good and popular style, but they were mostly on subjects of a light class, and they were purely and simply reviews, containing nothing which was not founded on the acts or thoughts of others. His conversation, likewise, afforded no evidence of originality; it was not in the least brilliant, and displayed

¹ A Selection from the Correspondence of Abraham Hayward, Q.C., from 1834 to 1884, with an Account of his Early Life. Edited by Henry E. Carlisle. London: John Murray. 1886.

chiefly a remarkable memory and power of quotation, great accuracy in dates and facts, strong opinions strongly expressed, and an impatience of contradiction, or even of dissent, amounting to intolerance, and not unfrequently leading to unpleasant collisions of temper. He was evidently not a rich man—he might even be called a poor one—inhabiting a small set of rooms on the second floor of a house in St James's Street, and sallying thence to dine at his club, the Athenæum. To the great majority of those who might chance to notice his small bent figure traversing Pall Mall with a rapid step, he was absolutely unknown by name. It might be supposed from all this that there was nothing greatly to distinguish him from a number of others who write essays and reviews anonymously in excellent English. But to have supposed this would have been a mistake. Though unaided by fortune or fame, he exercised in many respects an influence due only to a commanding intellect in a commanding position. In London and in country-houses he moved in a very elevated stratum of society—in most gatherings of the most fashionable people he was pretty sure to be found. Great ladies talked of him as "Hayward." Eminent persons dining at his club gravitated to the table where, like Cato, he gave his little senate

laws. Foreign statesmen, known throughout Europe, were his correspondents, and when they visited London, would seek interviews with him. But his influence appeared most distinctly in a political crisis, when great leaders would send for him, discuss the situation, and employ him in negotiating with statesmen of the class from which ministries are formed. This remarkable difference between the position which his apparent merits might naturally have gained for him and that which he actually enjoyed, forms a curious problem. It is to be accounted for not so much by his intellectual as by his moral characteristics. He was an exceedingly social man, and pushed his way with a hardihood which seemed to defy denial. His fondness for the company of persons of worldly consideration, backed by his strong self-confidence, procured for him a great number of important acquaintances, and these, it must be said, he never sought to propitiate by flattery; in all companies he was still Hayward, ready to meet all comers, and asserting himself and his opinions without compromise. Then he took an intense interest in public affairs and in other people's affairs. Though he never held any public office, he threw himself into the questions of the day with all the ardour of a professional politician, and always as an uncom-

promising partisan. With the same vehemence he would press into the quarrels, scandals, intrigues, and family histories of the world around him; and having an extraordinary memory, his value as a social chronicle, joined to his extensive literary information, rendered him acceptable in the *boudoirs*, and thus increased his general importance. Thus it came to pass that he had a large circulation; that those who met him everywhere took him to be somebody; and that public men found him most convenient to refer to on all matters of recent political history, and also on the opinions of their rivals and opponents, which, as soon as they were imparted to him, he never failed to proclaim most impartially: and as nothing afforded him so much delight as to be for the moment Mercury among the gods, he came to be known as a useful person in a difficulty, and, at moments when fear of change was perplexing ministries, might be met with hurrying from one great man to another, hanging on their arms in the public ways, asserting their policy, denouncing their opponents with a singular ardour of animosity, and telling everybody everything he knew about the matter,—for reticence was a virtue which he habitually cast to the winds.

These letters begin in 1834, when he was thirty-three years old, and had been ten years

in London. He had been for some years editor of the 'Law Magazine,' and in that character paid a visit to the jurists of Göttingen. Goethe was then alive, and Hayward heard so much about him from his admirers, that he set about a translation of 'Faust' in prose, which he published; and with his accustomed energy, before issuing a second edition, went again to Germany, where he consulted many eminent literary men and friends of the poet; and, thus fortified, the new edition rapidly attained to consideration both in Germany and England. This opened for him a door in London society, which he was not the man to remain outside of, and gave him the opportunity of using those means for pushing his way with which he was so notably equipped. Hobhouse, Macaulay, Scarlett, Whewell, Thirlwall, John Wilson, Babbage, Wordsworth, Southey, Sydney Smith, Lady Blessington, were some of his correspondents and acquaintances at this period. At this time he had chambers in the Temple (having apparently a certain amount of practice), and gave little dinners, which it was his ambition to render choice of their kind. The company was of the best, with such guests as Lockhart, Hook, James Smith, Lord Lyndhurst, Macaulay, Tom Moore, Louis Napoleon, and Mrs Norton. The viands were carefully selected, and the enter-

tainments owed perhaps some of their undoubted vogue to the fact that the host had just republished a couple of articles in the 'Quarterly' on the art of dining, which made him appear much more of an epicure than he really was. Going the western circuit, visiting a good deal at the interesting country-houses of interesting people, making fresh acquaintances among notables, dinner-giving and dinner-frequenting, pushing, dictating, denouncing, writing letters and receiving them, and preparing his careful articles for (at this time) the 'Edinburgh Review'—with an occasional trip to Paris,—such was the routine of his life, and so it continued to the end. We may here remark that these Letters show us nothing of the positive, combative, news-bearing, anecdote-recounting personage who wrote them—and it is no offence to say that the letters of such correspondents as Sydney Smith and Mrs Norton are far more entertaining than his own. It is really unfortunate that directly Hayward took pen in hand to write a letter, he dropped his remarkable personality. We say it is unfortunate, because in no other way could that remarkable personality have been more harmlessly displayed. To insist very strongly on a particular view of a matter in a letter would have been preferable to proclaiming it aggressively before a whole

company. It would have been much more in-offensive to denounce some opponent to a third person, than personally to assail himself; the phraseology would have gained force by being more carefully chosen than what he was accustomed to utter, his criticisms on men and their works would have found expression more worthy of his keen critical faculty, his anecdotes would have been more sparingly introduced; and we should thus have had Hayward painted in permanent and favourable colours by himself, instead of the somewhat featureless inditer of a decorous and merely historical correspondence. On the other hand, it would have been a great gain had he transferred to his conversation somewhat of the style of his letters. He would thereby have largely increased the circle of his friends and diminished that of his enemies; he would have gained for himself a hearing by better means than insistence; and he would have enjoyed an advantage which he did not often permit himself, in eliciting the free expression of the opinions of others, and in listening to and profiting by them. Nevertheless we must guard the reader against the inference that, with all his aggressiveness, he had not friends, and very good friends. Many such adhered to him up to the very end of his life, testified strongly their regard for him, and

continue still to lament his loss. The fact is, that he had some very sterling qualities. Though always a partisan, no partisan ever was more honest : biassed he might be by prejudice, but not by fear or by expectation of profit to himself. He was very thorough in his friendships. He was none of your lukewarm adherents who wait to be called on—he did not call that backing of his friends—but made their quarrel for the time his own. His outspokenness often took the form of serviceable candour, which made it all the more satisfactory for those to consult him who might know that his prepossessions were already on their side ; for they felt that while they had in him a staunch advocate, yet, when he might differ from them, they would be sure to hear of it, and his objection would be worth attention. And though he was undoubtedly too pugnacious, yet the courage which led him to strike the most renowned shields with his sharp point was of itself a title to confidence and applause.

It would be difficult to say to what political party Mr Hayward might be most inclined by nature. It has been indeed a silly Radical taunt, that intolerance and arbitrary tendencies are Tory traits ; but it has long been evident that nobody is so intolerant as a Radical. However this may be, Mr Hayward began

life as a Tory at twenty-five, when he was a member of the London Debating Society, and gained distinction in it by speeches which we are sure were clear and sharply put. As he never was in Parliament, his political views were of no great consequence till they underwent a change with the great schism of the Peelites. He had made a study of political economy, and, like most who ventured into that new country, became a free-trader. Therefore when the Peelites, in 1852, stood aloof from both the great parties, and when the endeavour was made to bring them into a Coalition Government along with the Whigs and the Radicals, Hayward threw himself into the scheme with such ardour, that he became, according to his own account, the principal agent, after the leading statesmen, in effecting the coalition. He set forth the views of the Peelites in the 'Morning Chronicle,' and fought their battles in all companies. Henceforth he threw in his lot with the Liberals, and the statesmen he sided with were the Duke of Newcastle, Sir G. Lewis, Sidney Herbert, Sir James Graham, Mr Cardwell, and Mr Gladstone—in fact, the Peelites. Later, he followed Mr Gladstone in the strides he made far in advance of the Liberal party; and if he were now alive, he might possibly be following him still.

No explanation is given in these letters of why Hayward never tried to enter Parliament. He would seem to have been the very man to ardently covet a seat. He had the strongest bent towards party politics. In the contentions of factions he would have been in his element; and he might thus have replaced by a new profession the one he had abandoned: for when made a Queen's Counsel in 1845, he got into a quarrel with the Benchers, and entered upon a conflict with these enemies in a fashion so very earnest, that his prospects of practice as a Q.C. were accounted as nought in the fury of battle, and were left to take care of themselves; so that, when his strife with these antagonists had come to an end, his legal career had come to an end also.

This piece of negotiation of 1852 was his first essay in the business of cabinet-making. His part in it is not made clear; probably it consisted in fitting the mortises and applying the glue; but whatever it was, he appears to have performed it very much to his own satisfaction. It is curious that his correspondence should give us so little information on this and similar subjects. There is no doubt that, while he was engaged on the business, everybody whom he chanced to converse with was made aware of all that was happening at every stage of it.

But in the less perishable record, he imparts to his correspondents only the briefest notices of that intrigue, his share in which gave him so much delight, and the accomplishment of which he looked back on with so much satisfaction. The chief record of it is the notice of a dinner which he gave to the leading Peelites, and which, he says, "has done great good by consolidating the Peel party, as there was a rumour that the leaders were divided." But his exertions must have gone beyond this conciliatory festival, for he tells a relation, "I have no doubt at all that if anything that suited me should turn up, they would offer it to me, as I have been of great use to them throughout." He was advised to apply for a commissionership under the Charitable Trusts Act, and used some efforts to get it. "I have most reluctantly become a place-hunter," he says; "but the plain matter of fact is, that I lost a considerable part of my small fortune on my brother's death." He failed to get it—why, we do not learn. Some years later Lord Aberdeen offered him the secretaryship of the Poor Law Board, expected to become vacant; but the vacancy did not occur, and Hayward remained to the close of his life an unofficial and unrewarded servant of the party he adhered to, doing his best to secure victories.

which brought him nothing, and fighting because he rejoiced in the battle.

It is likely that one cause of Hayward's devotion to Mr Gladstone was the animosity which he cherished towards Mr Gladstone's rival. The provocations seem to have been mutual, and which began them we know not. So early as 1850 we find Hayward pronouncing "Disraeli very nearly, if not quite, forgotten. How soon one of these puffed-up reputations goes down ! It is like a bladder after the pricking of a pin." This prophecy is not, perhaps, much to his credit as a soothsayer ; but he did more than prophesy. He not only furnished materials for attacks on Disraeli, but made one himself in the 'Edinburgh,' by which, he says exultingly, "the Disraelites were frenzied with rage." On the other hand, Mr Disraeli spoke of the *raconteur* Hayward as "in his anecdotage," and was supposed to have made a very uncomfortable allusion to him in a novel. On the whole, Hayward probably did his antagonist the more serious damage. When there was a prospect of Liberal victory at the election of 1880, he says: "I have been longing for the fall of the Disraeli Government as I did for the fall of the Second Empire"—and his longing impelled him to endeavour to secure the support of the 'Times' for the new Ministry. After an inter-

view with Mr Gladstone, Lord Hartington, and Lord Granville, "I went off," he says, "in the middle of the night to the 'Times' office, where I saw Chenery, the editor, an intimate friend of mine; and the first leading article in the 'Times' of to-day was the result." Whether anybody could now take pride in having helped to form that ruinous Administration is another question.

Meanwhile Hayward's contributions to periodical literature went on regularly. As we have seen, he had written a great deal for the 'Edinburgh,' but that connection came to an end, and apparently not a friendly end; for, with reference to a pamphlet he had written, he says, "I feel convinced they will lie and misquote in the 'Edinburgh.'" But he now returned to the 'Quarterly,' resuming a connection which had begun in Lockhart's time, and thereafter regularly had an article in every number till a few months before his death. On each of these occasions the process of incubation went on in a very public fashion. The progress of the article was communicated freely to his numerous acquaintances till the final hatching had little left to reveal, and it afforded a fruitful theme for discussion, orally and by letter, as soon as it was before the public—so that his essays, besides the writing of them, contributed

a great deal both to the interest and the business of his life. They were very highly estimated by men of letters like Lord Lytton and Lord Houghton, and certainly deserved it. He spared no pains to be accurate. He would consult any number of people to verify a single fact, or to procure a result which would be recorded in a few words. He had known so many persons of authority in his long and busy life, that he could at once command the best sources of information on any contemporary topic. What he most enjoyed, therefore, because he felt most at home in it, was to review some new book of memoirs relating to the literary or social or political history of the time. His style was perfectly lucid, and of its kind—that is, of a kind excluding all play of imagination or exercise of invention—excellent; clear-cut, logical, forcible without heaviness, and thickly set with the allusions, quotations, and anecdotes, which his extensive reading and large acquaintance with men had stored his mind with, and which his accurate memory could always place ready to his hand. So assured did he feel of his own infallible accuracy, that if any circumstance were called in question which he had at any time recorded, he would cite the fact that he had done so as a kind of evidence from which there could be

no appeal. But the most curious identification of himself with his writings was in the claim which he always asserted to consider any anecdote he had once related as his own property, which nobody thenceforward ought to meddle with. The present writer having heard from Richard Doyle a good story about Lord Nelson, repeated it to Hayward. But few stories could be told to him which he was not already acquainted with; and he had not only heard this one, but had narrated it, which caused him indignantly to ask, "What the devil does Doyle mean by spoiling *my* story?" On this occasion, however, Doyle's version turned out to be right.

It was not, however, contemporary subjects alone which could engage his attention. He once, on the appearance of the 'Memoirs of Sir Philip Francis,' took up the question as to who was Junius, with the view of disproving Sir Philip's claim. What was Junius to him, or he to Junius? Yet he threw himself into the question with an ardour which might have seemed excessive in a contemporary—pommelled Sir Philip Francis to his heart's content—seemed inclined to back Lord George Sackville's pretensions; but finally decided that the once formidable letters were supplied by "the Grenvilles," which, perhaps, does not help us much to a con-

clusion;—a failure, however, that matters the less, as few people now feel a lively interest in identifying the truculent phantom.

Among other subjects, he once wrote a dissertation on whist; and being in the habit of playing the game a good deal at the Athenæum, he used vigorously to propound its rules at the whist-table for the benefit of transgressors—so that, on very animated evenings, his rubber might be called a severe lecture on whist, with occasional illustrations from the cards; and if some fellow-player unhappily showed an impatient temper, the green cloth, “sacred to neatness and repose,” became an arena of resounding conflict. What might have happened if he had ever played whist with Charles Lamb’s friend, Mrs Battle, is terrible to contemplate.

The titles of some of his other articles will serve to indicate the tracks in which his pen habitually ran. “Pearls and Mock Pearls of History” gave his memory a wide range, so did “Varieties of History and Art,” “Curiosities of German Archives,” and “Vicissitudes of Families.” Ancient scandals were investigated with great gusto, as in the papers, “Marie Antoinette,” and “The Countess of Albany and Alferi.” Sometimes the subject bore a graver title, as “Lanfrey’s Napoleon,” “The British Parliament,

its History and Eloquence," and "England and France — their National Qualities, Manners, Morals, and Society;" but these, too, were treated from their light sides, and the same gay stream of agreeable gossip about them bore on its tide great shoals of anecdotes. "Sir Henry Holland's Recollections," "Madame de Sévigné," "Madame du Deffand," suggest papers in which he would be quite in his element, passing with a light step through scenes made picturesque and interesting by the notable and historic figures which crowded them. But of the whole list, the two in which Hayward must have revelled most are "Holland House" and "Strawberry Hill"; combining researches into corners of the history of former generations with personal recollections of famous guests who had frequented those mansions along with him; the whole illustrated by a wealth of anecdote such as no one but himself had amassed, and much of which, until he recorded it, was drifting on the casual current of oral narrative towards oblivion. To tell a good story about famous people for the first time was probably as high a pleasure as he could know.

Towards the end of his life his strong memory perhaps began a little to fail him. In his "Madame de Sévigné," published in the volume

of 1880, he quotes the well-known passage about Cleopatra thus—

“Age cannot *weary* her, nor custom *tire*
Her infinite variety,”—

instead of “wither” and “stale.” This was pointed out to him as a supposed injury done to him by the printer; but he shook his head and said he feared he, not the printer, was the culprit.

Besides the seven volumes of his selected Essays, he appears only to have published two other works in volumes—the one his translation of ‘Faust,’ his earliest publication; the other the biography of Goethe for “Blackwood’s Foreign Classics”—written when he was already a very old man.

We have been induced to offer this sketch of Mr Hayward because, as we have already noted, he presented a very remarkable individuality, and one well worth preserving, which is nowhere made apparent in these Letters. They might have been written by a man fond of society, of almost any profession or almost any persuasion. When he wrote his letters he put off his shoes of swiftness and laid aside his sword of sharpness, but put on his cloak of darkness, and went masquerading in the, for him, fancy costume of a quite commonplace character. In

all companies he was irrepressible and conspicuous. Nobody who knew him could imagine him as conceding, or conciliating, or deferring, or implying concurrence which he did not feel, or meeting dissent with silence, or ignoring arrogant pretension, or resorting to any of the amiable shifts which oil the machinery of social life. He was nothing if not a gladiator. And he led, under these somewhat adverse conditions, a very pleasant life. That there was plenty of matter to outweigh his defects is apparent from the fact that most of his friends went on habitually dining with him up to the last with high mutual satisfaction. He alludes, in the Letters, to the well-known table at the Athenæum, which he had got to consider his own, as "the Corner," where his most frequent companion was his old and intimate friend Mr Kinglake, whom he esteemed probably more than he esteemed anybody else. Here he enjoyed, on most evenings when he was not dining out—which he very often was—one of the greatest pleasures he could desire, that of being a conspicuous member of a party of distinguished men. To the old friends who generally assembled round him, he added, at every opportunity, any eminent foreigner or stranger admitted as a temporary guest by the rules of the Club—and only such are admitted. To

say the truth, he carried this appropriation of desirable guests to an extreme; and many a projected quiet converse between old friends, just met after long separation, has been upset by Hayward insisting on laying hands on the illustrious stranger. Here he would air his anecdotes, ventilate his projects, report the progress of his literary work in hand, and inveigh against his enemies, including in that comprehensive class everybody who differed from him. These scenes he continued to vary by visits to some of the most agreeable houses in England, and to most entertainments in London where many great people were gathered together. For this kind of life he made his income suffice; and it is quite probable that an accession of wealth would not have made him happier. He had quite enough to preserve, what he doubtless valued above most things, his independence.

He was of a small, slight figure, stooping a good deal — pale of complexion and high-featured, large of nose and mouth. His hair, white latterly, was smooth, and ended in rows of small curls—insomuch that a lady to whom we pointed him out across Bond Street, noting this fleecy *chevelure*, observed that he was like a pet lamb—an animal which he did not in other respects resemble. He seemed to enjoy

unfailing health¹ up to his final illness, when, in his eighty-third year, at the approach of winter, he found that he could no longer take his seat at the Club. He remained for many weeks in his rooms, still able to enjoy the company of the many fast friends who came to sit with him, his chief consolation being in the company of his tried associate Kinglake, who was unremitting in those visits which gave such comfort to the departing Hayward. For the last few days he took to his bed, having a nurse to take care of him. Towards the close he wandered a little, and at one time fancied the Government wanted to talk with him about difficulties in Egypt, and that he ought to go to them. The nurse, experienced in such matters, sought to soothe him—"No, no, Mr Hayward; 'tis all right about Egypt!" This audacity of hers, first in contradicting him, and then in presuming to know anything about Egypt, recalled his wandering faculties. Looking at the erring though well-meaning woman, he said, "You hold your tongue; you don't know anything at all about it!"—which characteristic utterance was one of his very last.

Of the book itself we have said little, for there is little to say. Many of the letters are written by notable persons; but the subject-matter is dull, and often trivial. An unusual

amount of it consists of what people don't want to read, or of what they have read elsewhere. To take an instance—there are many letters about the Crimean war; but what new light do they throw on it? How can it interest anybody to be told what each of several correspondents thought of each of Mr Hayward's articles? or that the Duke of Newcastle was anxious to get into the Athenæum Club? Yet if all matter of this kind were taken out of the book, what would be left?

THE END.



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